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A N
EXPOSITION
WITH
Practicall Observations

CONTINUED UPON
The Thirty Second, the Thirty Third,
and the Thirty Fourth Chap-
ters of the Booke of

Pen
Cur
Book
Soul
March 20/15
JOB:

BEING

The Substance of Forty-nine Lectures, delivered at *Magna*
neare the Bridge, LONDON.

By JOSEPH CARYL, Preacher of the Gospel,
and Pastour of the Congregation there.

Pro: 18. 17.

*He that is first in his owne cause, seemeth just; but his neigh-
bour cometh and searcheth him.*

L O N D O N;

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TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER;

TO
Those especially of this C I T I E,
who yet continue helpfull
towards this W O R K E.

S I R S ;

I have had (according to my
poore measure) the whole dis-
putation between Job and his
three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad
and Zophar, explicated in nine
parts already published; I now
bring and good hand of God with
me) p. with the Tenth; which indeed,
without any designe or pre-intent of mine, proves
like the Tenth wave from the vast ocean of this
holy Booke, somewhat bigger, and fuller, I cannot
say (and 'tis my reproofe having been so long con-
versant in this booke that I cannot say) stronger
and better, i.e. more spirituall (which alone is the
strength of Scripture writings) then the former;
but such as it is (& that it is such as it is, I own.

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and humbly acknowledge the goodness of God in using me to doe it, such as it is (I say) I freely tender it to your favourable acceptance, & dedicate it to the glory of God & the common good: knowing that it is both my duty and Interest to shew the small improvement though but of one single talent, rather then, either through sloath or slavish modesty to hide it in a Napkin.

In the prefatory Epistle to the second part of this book, there was an endeavour of a discovery concerning the distinct opinion of Iobs three friends, as also of what himself insisted upon all along in distinction. And now that I have done with on both sides by the disputations open the discourse of Elihu, Moderator to give a determination; Great Question, so long ventita; it may seeme somewhat necessary, am much perswaded (if in any competency attained) it will not be unprofitable, to give The Reader a briefe prospect of what Elihu sayeth at and doth in this his large and accurate discourse, continued in sixe Chapters throughout and divided into (besides his Generall preface which takes up the whole thirty second Chapter) foure remarkable sections.

Elihu

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Elihu is introduced by the pen-man of this booke in a great passion, both with Job and his three friends, and he gives us an account why he was in such a heate of passion with both (chap: 32. 2, 3.)

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu; against Job was his wrath kindled, because he had justified himselfe rather then God. Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

It remaines therefore, that Elihu was the man, who found an answer in this great difficulty and yet condemned not Job. And indeed he condemned him not (as his friends had done) as a man imperfect & crooked in his wayes, as a man that feared not God & eschewed not evil, In or for these things Elihu did not condemne Job, though his wrath was kindled against him: he condemned him only for this, because he complained so much of the severity of Gods dealings with him, and so, by consequence justified himselfe rather then God. And in that poynt or for that fault he spared him not, but reprov-
ed him as sharply and condemned him as deeply as his friends had done upon other and those (most of them) undue and insufficient grounds. Thus we read his censure of him (chap: 34. 35. Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom. And againe (chap: 35. 16.)

There-

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Therefore Job openeth his mouth in vaine, he multiplyeth words without knowledge; *that is, without a cleare knowledge of himselfe both as a creature and as a sinner, as also of the designe and purpose of God in afflicting him.*

Now, besides those passages in the discourse of Elihu wherein he chargeth Jobs three friends with folly for condemning Job when they could not answer him, & those wherein he reproves Jobs ignorance or want of knowledge, for wondring how such great evils should fall upon him, notwithstanding his integrity, likewise his boldness or peremptoriness in his own cause, justifying himselfe rather than God, yea and desiring to plead his cause before him; I say besides these passages, we at first reading might conclude that Elihu did nothing else throughout these six chapters, but enlarge or paraphrase upon those things, which had long before been spoken to by Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar, and by Job himselfe as much as by any of, if not beyond all them three.

But upon further consideration of the matter in the whole series and contexture of his discourse, we may collect two things, instanced in and insisted on by Elihu alone, upon which his particular opinion and sentence is grounded in distinction from all the rest. The cleare understanding of which, will lead

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us to a faire solution or removall of those doubts which arise about the question or matter in debate.

The two distinct poynts produced by Elihu, are, First, about Revelation, or how God is pleased to manifest his mind and will to man. Secondly, about Mediation, or the meanes which God hath graciously afforded man to heale those breaches, which sin hath made between God and him, and so either firstly, or afresh to reconcile man againe to himselfe.

The Former of these is handled (chap: 33. v. 14, 15, 16, 17.) For God speaketh once, yea twice, though man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deepe sleepe falleth upon men: Then he openeth the eares of men, and seal-eth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man. And thus, as it is said in the verse following, He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword; that is, these speakings of God are by the saving power and Spirit of God made effectuall for his salvation both temporall and eternal.

*The latter is handled in the same chapter, beginning at the 23^d verse to the end of the 30th. If there be a messenger (or Angel) with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness: then he is gracious unto him, and
faith,*

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faith, Deliver him from going downe to the pit, I have found a ransome. His flesh shall be fresher then a childes, he shall returne to the dayes of his youth. He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him, and he shall see his face with joy, &c.

Hence the opinion or determination of Elihu may be thus conceived.

That, notwithstanding all the confusions and disorders which seeme to be in the affaires of this world, the providence of God over mankinde in Generall, and his great mercy towards the righteous in speciall, is seene most eminently in these two things.

First, In that he inspires them with the knowledge of heavenly things, or acquaints them some way or other with his mind, both as to the meaning of what he doth to them, and of what he would have them doe.

Secondly, In that he provideth and sends them a messenger or mediatur both to instruct them in their duty, &c. to pray for mercy, and so consequently to deliver them, when their soule draweth neere to the Grave, and their life to the destroyers.

Both these gracious dispensations of God are proper to righteous men, or at least appropriate to them in a peculiar manner; the righteous are the
men

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men for whom God provides a messenger or mediator, and the righteous are the men whom God savingly and effectually inspires with the knowledge of his will, in the things which concerne both their present worke and future reward. Neither hath Satan any power so to darken their understandings about those great things as to make them miscarry; and as for all his other mischievous plots and practices against them, they serve to a cleane contrary purpose then he intendeth, according to that most comfortable assertion of the Apostle (Rom: 8. 28.) We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Satan provoked God for a licence to heape outward calamities upon Job in stripping him naked of his worldly substance, and in tormenting his body with grievous paines and sickness; which latter Elihu prosecutes at large (chap: 33. 19, 20, 21, 22.) He is chastned also with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine; so that his life abhorreth bread, &c. And what he speakes of sickness is applicable to any or all sorts of affliction; in all which (as it is sayd, v. 27, 28, 29, 30.) God looketh upon men, and if any say I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not; he will deliver his

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soule from going into the pit, and his lite shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, to bring back his soule from the pit, to be enlightned with the light of the living.

From these premises we may collect both what is proper to the righteous; and that, in whatsoever is common to them with the wicked, there is neither disorder nor confusion. For though the best of the righteous are lyable to the same outward evils which the worst of the wicked are, yet their condition is not the same; seeing to the wicked those evils are purely punishments, & but the beginning of those sorrows which shall never end; whereas to the righteous they are either but chastisements for some sin already committed, or medicaments to prevent the committing either of the same, or of some other sin. And as for those who by such chastnings are brought to a sight of their sins and forsake them, their soules are (by this meanes, v. 30.) brought back from the pit to be enlightned with the light of the living.

This poynt is yet more fully and plainly prosecuted by Elihu in the 36th chapter; where he informeth us, how sufferings are differently to be conceived of according to a threefold difference of the persons suffering. The first, and chiefe, is of those, who

are:

are truly righteous and keep close to God in righteous wayes. The second is of those who being righteous in their state, have fallen foully in their way, with whom we may also reckon such as are yet in an unrighteous state, yet shall be and at last are converted and brought home to God. The third is of those who persevere and obstinately continue in their wicked state and wayes, stopping their eares, and hardning their hearts, both against instruction and correction.

Elihu seemeth to put all these together (v. 5, 6.) Behold God is mighty and despiseth not any, he is mighty in strength and wisdom, he preserveth not the life of the wicked, but giveth right to the poore. More distinctly,

He speaks of the first (v. 7.) He (that is, God) with-draweth not his eyes from the righteous: but with kings are they on the throne, yea, he doth establish them for ever, and they are exalted.

He speaks of the second sort v. 8, 9, 10, 11. And if they be bound in fetters and holden in the cords of affliction, then he sheweth them their worke and their iniquity, that they have exceeded. He openeth also their eare to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity, &c.

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He speaks of the third sort (v. 13, 14.) But the hypocrites in heart heap up wrath; they cry not when he bindeth them; they dye in youth, and their life is among the uncleane.

These three sorts of men are dealt with by God according to their kind. The last of them being altogether wicked and incorrigible, abide under wrath for ever.

The second being in an evill state or having done that which is evill, yet humbling themselves (through grace) and being bettered by their afflictions, are usually restored to a prosperous estate in this life, & in case they dy under affliction, are alwayes crowned with the blessedness of eternal life.

The First sort, walking constantly (humane frailties excepted) in their uprightness, are not only preserved in peace, but receive high favours and speciall markes of honour from the bountifull hand of God; which is true, especially according to the condition of those times, wherein God did more engage himselfe to his faithfull servants in promises of temporall happines, then now he doth in Gospel times.

And yet even these, as now they are not, so then they were not alwayes exempted from sufferings; For as the second sort of righteous men are often afflicted in a way of chastisement for their sins;
so.

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so the Lord reserves to himselfe a liberty (his Sovereignty allowing it) to afflict the best and holiest of his servants for the tryall of their graces, or the magnifying of his owne grace to them and in them; as a Master of Heroick Arts and Games imposeth a very laborious task upon his Schollar-Champion, not as a punishment of any default, but to confirme his strength and exercise his valour.

The due consideration of all these things layd together by Elihu, might well satisfie Job, and sustaine his faith in a patient bearing the burden of all those calamities, which the Great and most wise God was pleased to impose upon him, and likewise convince him that he had fayled much in giving out so many impatient complaints about them. And no doubt they prevailed much with him, both towards his conviction, and the quieting of his heart under those dispensations; For we beare no more of him in that language.

Yet Elihu thought he had not done enough, but continueth his discourse, and draweth a further demonstration for his purpose, from the wonderfull workes of God in nature, from the raine, thunder, snow, windes, &c. which he doth from the 27th verse of the 36th Chapter, to the end of the 37th, and with that concludes his answer.

The

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The scope of Elihu in that long and learned Philosophicall Lecture was to teach and assure Job, that, God who causeth and disposeth those various alterations and terrible impressions in the ayre, both for the humbling and benefiting of man, doth much more both send and over-rule all those changes & afflictions which befall the sons of men, here on earth, to humble them & do them good. And further to assure him, that if man be not able to give a satisfying reason of those workes of God in nature, but is often gravel'd and forced to sit downe in a silent admiration; then surely man is much lesse able to fathome the depth of Gods purposes in all the workes of his providence, but must in many of them only sit downe quietly and submit; For (as Elihu concludeth from these premises (Chap: 37. 23, 24.) Touching the Almighty we cannot find him out, he is Excellent in power and in Judgement, and in plenty of Justice he will not afflict, (either causelessly or more then needs, though we seldome see the causes or acknowledge the need of his afflictions) men doe (that is, they ought) therefore feare him ; and if any are so proud and high in their owne thoughts that they doe not, at their perill be it , for) he respecteth not any that are wise in heart ; that is , as the carnal wisdom of worldly men cannot be a barre,

so

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so the true wisdom of godly men is no privilege against the Sovereign power of God in afflicting them. And therefore Job, though truly wise in heart, must not looke for any such respect from God as to be untoucht by or priviledg'd from affliction.

For the close of all, we may summe up the whole scope of Elihu's under-taking with Job, yea of the whole Booke of Job in these six poynts or propositions.

First, No man can stand before God in his owne personall righteousness:

Secondly, How righteous soever any person is, yet the Lord may afflict and breake him in what way and in what degree himselfe thinkes fit.

Thirdly, God hath most wise and gracious ayms in afflicting his righteous servants.

Fourthly, His most righteous servants may not take the liberty to complaine as if they were wrong'd, or as if God were either rigorous or unrighteous in the least, how much or how long soever they are afflicted.

Fifthly, There is nothing gotten by complaining or striving under the afflicting hand of God; and therefore

Sixthly, 'Tis best for us or our wisest way
when:

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when things are at worst with us to give glory to God both as just and good, and (possessing our soules with patience) by faith to waite in hope, till he giueth us a fresh experience of his goodnesse, eyther by sweetning our troubles to us, and supporting us under them, or by bringing us out of them (as he did Job) in the fittest season.

If in perusing this discourse of Elihu we carry these generall results in our eye, we shall read both the Text and Comment with more clearenesse in our understandings at all times, and with more profit (when at any time under them) in our chastenings, which, that we all may is the prayer of

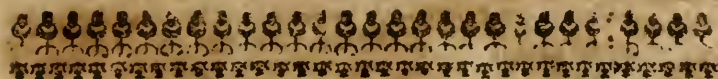
Your affectionate Servant

The 24th of the
3^d Moneth

in this worke of Christ

1661.

JOSEPH CARYL.



A N
E X P O S I T I O N
W I T H
Practically Observations
U P O N
The Thirty-second, Thirty-third,
and Thirty-fourth Chapters of the Book of
J O B.

J O B, Chap. 32. Vers. 1, 2, 3.

So these three men ceased to answer Job, because he was righteous in his own eyes.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram : against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himself rather than God.

Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled : because they had found no answer, and yet had con-

The last Chapter ended with these words, The words of Job are ended ; the beginning of this tells us his three friends had ended theirs. So these three men ceased to answer Job ; Thus we have had the whole dispute between Job and his three friends ; Now followeth the determination of it. The disputants having done, in ; First Elihu, and after him God himselfe.

B

Elihu

Elihu spends six whole Chapters in delivering his mind upon this Controversie; yet he makes some pauses and overtures, moving or inviting *Job* to a reply. But *Job* interposed not a word.

We may consider this whole discourse of *El'hu* in four distinct parts; the first contained in the 32^d and 33^d Chapters; the second in the 34th, the third in the 35th, and the fourth in the 36th and 37th Chapters of this Book.

In the first part, he directeth his speech; first to *Jobs* three friends, in this 32^d Chapter; Secondly, to *Job* himselfe in the 33^d.

In this Chapter we may consider, first a rationall transition from the dispute between *Job* and his friends, to this discourse of *Elihu*, in the five first verses; Secondly, we have a very Rhetoricall or patheticall Preface, wherein *Elihu* endeavoureth to gaine attention by giving an account, or the reasons of his undertaking, in which he interweaves many Apologies for himselfe, in venturing upon so hard a taske, respecting both his youth, and the weight of the argument. He amplifies and continueth upon this subject to the end of the 32^d Chapter; wherein he engageth himselfe by solemne promise to carry on the businesse without respect of persons, without feare or flattery.

Yet more distinctly in this first part, The transition; first, a reason is assigned why *Job's* friends left off speaking. *As it is not good to begin to speak, so neither to give over speaking, till we see and can give a reason for it*; The reason here given, is, because *Job was righteous in his own eyes* (v. 1.) Secondly, a reason is given not only why *Elihu* did begin to speak, but why he began to speak as he did, *in anger*; first, against *Job*, which is laid downe in the second verse, *Because he justified himselfe rather then God*; Secondly, against his friends (ver. 3.) *Because they had answered him without reason, and had condemned Job, or, because they thought they could not confute him.* In the 4th we have a discovery of the cause of *Elihu's* model to speak, which he further enlargeth in of the Chapter.

Verf. 1. So these three men ceased to answer.

They who had maintained the dispute all rested, or sat downe. When men speak they

or stand forth. The word in the Hebrew may be rendred thus ; *They sabbatized*, implying they had found it a week of hard work, *Verbum ipsum* and strong labour in dealing and tugging with *Job* ; And now as if *לבו* indicat contentione. their *seventh day* or *Saboth* were come, they sate downe and took *Or defatigationem disputatio-* their rest. Speaking, especially arguing and disputing with a *nis præterita* knowing and resolved adversary, is tough worke ; And they who *Or ingentem vim positam in repugnando Or resutando.* have been at it to purpose, may for very wearinesse have causee-
nough to rest or take their *Saboth* ; so did these three men, they ceased or sabbatiz'd from answering *Job*.

We may yet further enquire, why did they cease ? First, some men cease to answer, because they have no more to answer. Secondly, others cease to answer, because they suppose they have answered enough already, and will answer no more. Some say the former was the reason why *Jobs* three friends ceased to answer, they had no more to answer ; Others take the latter, that they had no mind, no will to give any further answer. But the reason expressed in the text (which should satisfie us and superseed further queries) is,

Because he was righteous in his owne eyes.

As if it had been said, *Because they saw they had done no good upon him, Job kept his ground and maintained his standing, he disputed every inch with them, and yeilded not an inch ; as they found him at first, so he was at last, they saw him a man immoveably set downe in his owne purpose and opinion, and therefore, because they could get nothing by speaking, they would speak no more.* 'Tis but lost labour, (as we say) *to wash the Blackmore.* The constancy and warmth of *Job* in defending himselfe they judged obstinacy and a humour to oppose, or but the swelling of a proud spirit ; whereas indeed it was the love of truth, not of contention, a zeale to doe himselfe right, not to doe them wrong, which caused him still to hold up the Bucklers, and adhere so stiffely to his owne opinion. Thus despayring to convince or bring him to an acknowledgement, that he was unrighteous, *they ceased.*

Because he was righteous in his owne eyes.

That's such another forme of speaking (*Pro. 3. 7.*) *Be not wise in thine owne eyes* ; As also that (*Pro. 26. 12.*) *Seest thou a man wise in his owne conceit, there is more hope of a fool then of him.*

You may eaſier reduce a man that is indeed ignorant, then him that thinks himſelfe very wiſe, or knowing, but is not. This was the apprehenſion of *Jobs* friends concerning him, *He was a man* (thought they and ſo they ſaid) *righteous in his owne eyes*.

There are three ſorts of righteous perſons. Firſt, ſuch as are righteous in the eyes of God, and ſo the Godly are under a two-fold notion; Firſt, as being pardoned for or juſtified from their unrighteouſneſſe, through faith in Chriſt; Bleſſed are they who are thus accounted righteous in the eyes of God. Secondly, they are righteous; as avoyding unrighteous, and doing righteous things. There is a ſeed a principle of righteouſneſſe in perſons juſtified and regenerated, which dayly puts it ſelfe forth in righteous actings; *He that doth righteouſneſſe is righteous* (1 Joh: 3. 7.) He is ſo, both as to his ſtate, and as to his actions, in the eyes of God and good men.

Secondly, Many are righteous in the eyes of men, they have faire appearances and out-fides; you can read nothing amiſſe in their converſation, yet they are unrighteous, yea altogether unrighteous in the eyes of God, yea and poſſibly in their owne too; They cannot but ſee their own wickedneſſe; though they can conceale it from the ſight of others. Hypocrites are like painted Sepulchers, faire without (as Chriſt ſpake of the Pharifees) but within full of rottenneſſe. They ſeeme that to men which God ſeeth they are not; They can ſhew their beſt ſide to and hide their worſt from men; but they cannot play this game with God; he ſeeth their beſt is bad, becauſe it is but the covering, not the hating, not the mortifying of that which is bad.

Thirdly, There is another ſort who are righteous in their own eyes; ſuch *Solomon* deſcribes (*Prov. 30. 12.*) *There is a generation that are pure in their owne eyes, and yet is not waſhed from their filthineſſe*. Theſe have a great opinion of themſelves; They think all is right and well with them, when indeed they are filthy and uncleane, their hearts being yet unchanged, though their wayes are ſmoothed; and though they may have left off to doe many filthy things, yet they are not waſhed from their filthineſſe. The text in hand puts *Job* into this third ſort of righteous men. But was it thus with him? I anſwer; Firſt, *Job* was a man righteous in the eyes of God, in both the notions mentioned; he was righteous as juſtified and righteous as ſanctified. Secondly,

Job

Job was a man righteous in the eyes of many men; for he saith (Chap. 29. 11.) *The ear which heard me blessed me, and the eye which saw me gave witness to me*; yet *Job* had not an universall testimony given by men; There were some, I cannot say many, in whose eyes he was unrighteous; He was so in the eyes and opinion of his friends especially. Though none could, as to the eye, tax *Job* with any unrighteousnesse, no nor they who doubtlesse had sifted his life to the bran, yet his friends thought him unrighteous, and he stood judg'd as unrighteous in their eye.

As for the third sort of righteousness, that of being righteous in our owne eyes we must distinguish; *Job* was indeed righteous in his owne eyes in a good sence, and that under a twofold consideration; First, as not having committed any gross or scandalous act of wickednesse, as he professed at large and with much confidence in that apologie and vindication which he made for himselfe in the Chapter foregoing; where he calls downe the severest judgements of God upon himselfe, if he had done such things as he was suspected of, especially if he had defiled himselfe with those common polutions of the world, wantonnesse, injustice and oppression. *Job* stood upon it that he was thus righteous. Secondly, *Job* was righteous in his owne eyes, as to the allowing of himselfe in any the least sin or unevennesse, either of heart or life; Thus much his protestation or imprecation amounts to in the 33d verse of that Chapter; *If I have covered my transgressions as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosome*; As if he had said, I have not lived in the love of any sin whatsoever. Thus *Job* was righteous in his owne eyes, protesting to God, and before men, that as he was not scandalously wicked in any kinde, so he was not closely nor hypocritically wicked; every sin was his burden, and the abhorrence of his soule. in any other sence *Job* was far from being righteous in his owne eyes; He never either said or thought he had done no evill, or was altogether sinlesse, like white paper without blot or blur; yea we very often find him confessing his sins and failings. (Chap. 7. 20.) *I have sinned; what shall I doe unto thee thou preserver of men?* He maketh a like acknowledgement (Chap. 9. 2.) *I know it is so of a truth, but how shall man be just with God? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him one of a thousand.* Again. (ver. 20.) *If I justify myselfe, my mouth shall condemne me: If I say I am perfect,*
it.

it shall also prove me perverse. And while he affirms the generall viciousnesse of nature, he must needs imply his owne (Chap. 15. 14.) *What is man that he should be cleane? and he which is borne of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold he putteth no trust in his Saints; yea the heavens are not cleane in his sight, how much more abominable and filthy is man? In this universall conclusion, he includeth himselfe, therefore Job was far from being righteous in his owne eyes in any proud opinion of his owne righteousness or freedome from any itaine of sin. So much for the opening of those words, containing the reason why his friends ceased to answer; Because he was righteous in his owne eyes.*

It was the designe of these three men not only to convince Job that he was a sinner, but to bring him upon his knees as a notorious sinner; And yet all their allegations and arguments could not bring him to it; *My righteousness* (said he; Chap. 27. 6.) *I hold fast, I will not let it goe.* Now, when they saw him thus resolved and stiffe in maintaining the goodnesse of his cause, and the integrity of his spirit, they quitted the businesse, or as the text saith, *ceased to answer.*

Hence note;

We cease to doe when we cannot attaine our end in doing.

*Impossibilium
nullus est co-
natus.*

When we see it is in vaine to perswade, we give over perswading, Despayre of working our end, puts an end to our working. Industry is at a stand, yea withdraweth when impossibilities appeare. And though nothing be impossible unto God, yet we find God himselfe giving over both speaking and smiting when he seeth he is like to doe no good by eyther. Thus he expresseth his purpose (Isa. 1. 5.) when he had spent many rods of sore Judgements & afflictions upon that people, when he had stricken them till, from the crowne of the head, to the sole of the feete; they were nothing but a continued wound, and yet they received not correction; he presently reasons thus, *Why should ye be stricken any more, ye will revolt more and more.* As if he had said, *The end why I smote you was to amend you, to bring you home to my selfe, to cause you to turne back, or returne from your evill wayes, but I see I have lost my labour, and spent not only my rods but my scorpions in vaine upon you, therefore I will cease from this kind of work, why should ye be stricken any more, ye will revolt more and more.*

And

And when God hath spoken long to a people who regard it not, he ceaseth to speak any more, but saith, Why should ye be taught any more? Let the Prophets tongue cleave to the roof of his mouth; let him be dumb and silent, as the word is (*Ezek. 3. 26.*) *Thou shalt be dumb, and shalt not be a reprover* (why) *for they are a rebellious house.* After all thy speaking, they continue rebelling, therefore speak no more. We read the like dreadfull prohibition (*Hos. 4. 4.*) *Let no man strive. nor reprove another* (let all wayes of reclaiming this people be laid aside) *For thy people are as they that strive with the Priest*; That is, they are obdurate and desperately ingaged in wickednesse (*Hos. 4. 17.*) *Ephraim is joyned to Idols* (he cleaveth and sticketh fast to them, he will not be pulled from his owne inventions) *Let him alone.* Thus God saith to his Prophets and Ministers, *cease*, he saith to his Ordinances, *cease*, when sinners will not cease to sin and doe wickedly against the Lord. The same unprofitable and incorrigible people are threatned in the same manner by another Prophet (*Amos 8. 9.*) *It shall come to passe in that day, saith the Lord God, that I will cause the Sun to goe downe at noone.* And (*ver. 11.*) *I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, but of hearing the words of the Lord.* God would stop the raining down of heavenly Manna; and the people should not heare, because they would not. Such was the sentence of Christ against the *Jewes* (*Math. 23. 37.*) *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the Prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* What follows this refusall? read and tremble (*ver. 38.*) *Behold your house is left unto you desolate, for I say unto you, ye shall not see me henceforth, &c.* As if he had said, because ye have been so unteachable, therefore ye shall be taught no more. It is sad, when we give God occasion to give over either speaking to us or afflicting us. God will not alwayes strive with the unwillingnesse, much lesse with the wilfulnesse of man; nor will men be alwayes doing that to men, which they see doth them no good. *So these three men ceased, &c.*

Secondly, Note hence;

When men are obstinate and will not be reclaimed, it is good to give over.

Why should they who in any kind are absolutely resolved, be further

further moved? (*Acts 21. 14.*) *When Pauls friends saw he would not be perswaded, they ceased* : they had used much perswasion to keepe him from going up to *Jerusalem*, because of the sufferings that were prophesied should befall him there, yet when he stood out, in an holy obstinacy against them, clothed with a gracious spirit of courage to suffer for Christ ; *when he would not be perswaded they ceased, saying, the will of the Lord be done.* As it was the height of *Pauls* holiness that he would not be perswaded, he was obstinate for Gods cause, or for the doing of a duty ; so it is the height of many mens wickednesse that they will not be perswaded, they are obstinate against God, or against the doing of their duty ; Such as are infected with the lust of contending, will maintaine that opinion pertinaciously, which they cannot maintaine truly. As some strive for the love of victory, rather then of truth ; so others strive because they love strife even more then victory, and had rather contend then conquer, because that puts an end to strife. In such cases they doe best who doe no more ; And if *Jobs* case had been such, if he had held up the discourse, not for truth but for victory, or because he would have the last word, like a clamorous Sophister, who hath alwayes somewhat to say, though nothing to the purpose ; In that case, I say, *Jobs* friends had done wisely in ceasing to answer ; They indeed did well upon their owne supposition, though as to the truth of *Jobs* condition they failed greatly. *Job* was not a man of that spirit, he that persists in holding and defending truth, is not obstinate but constant.

Further, as to the ground why they ceased, according to their supposition,

Observe ;

* *To be righteous in our owne eyes is hatefull both to God and good men.*

A man is never so vile in the eyes of those who can discern him, as when he is righteous in his owne ; how righteous soever any man is, he should be little in owning it. To insist much upon our owne righteousness, savours rankly of a Pharisee (*Luke 18. 9.*) Christ spake a parable to this purpose (that's the title of the Parable) (*ver. 9.*) *And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.*

Then

Then follows the Pharisees boast of his fasting twice in the weeke, &c. And when the text saith (*ver. 14.*) *the Publican went downe to his house justified rather then the other.* It doth not imply that the Pharisee was at all justified, but rather that being righteous in his owne eyes, he was under a sad sentence of condemnation in the eyes of God. The meaning is not that the Pharisee was somewhat justified, and the Publican more; But that the Pharisee was not justified at all. It is our duty to follow after righteousness, but our sin to boast of it (*Math. 5. 3.*) *Blessed are the poore in spirit. The more poore we are in spirit, the more rich we are in spiritualls.* Poverty of spirit is directly opposite to our being righteous in our owne eyes. *Christ came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.* (*Math. 9. 13.*) By the righteous there we are to understand those that are righteous in their owne eyes, those that have high thoughts of themselves; The sinners whom Christ calls to repentance are the poore in spirit, though indeed the righteous in their owne eyes, are the greatest sinners. As we never doe worse, or more against right, then when we doe that (as it was said of that ungovern'd age, *Judg. 17. 6.*) which is right in our own eyes, so we are never worse, then when we are righteous in our owne eyes.

From the whole matter of these words, we see, that as *Jobs* friends had been mistaken all along in that which they spake, so now in the reason of their ceasing to speake; which was a supposall that *Job* was righteous in his owne eyes.

Hence observe;

There is nothing more common then for men to mistake and misjudge one another.

Jobs friends concluded him settled in a proud conceit of his owne righteousness, because he constantly denyed their charge of unrighteousnesse. Some impose an opinion upon their brethren which is not theirs, and make them say that, which they doe not affirme; how injurious is this! yea some misjudge the word of God, as well as the words of men. They wrest the Scriptures, (*2 Pet. 3. 16.*) They make the Scripture speake that, which the holy Ghost never intended. It is dangerous to straine the word of a man, much more the word of God. The former proceeds from a want of charity, but the latter is a great impiety. There

could not be a more unrighteous thought conceived of *Job* in any mans heart, then that he was (as his friends thought him) righteous in his owne eyes; yet thus they thought him, nor would they thinke otherwise of him, let him say what he would to the contrary. So much of the first verse which giveth us a reason why *Jobs* friends sate downe and ceased to answer; His being (as they judged him) righteous in his owne eyes. In the next verse *Elihu* gives out a severer Judgement against him then this; To be at all righteous in our owne eyes (according to the sence intended) argues a man to be both very blind and very proud, but for a man to be so righteous in his owne eyes, as that he dares justifie himselfe rather then the most righteous God, argues not only blindness and pride, but pride and blasphemy; yet thus saith *Elihu* of *Job*, as it followeth.

Vers. 2. *Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram: against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himselfe rather then God.*

Here comes in the fourth speaker, as a moderator or determiner of this great dispute; And he begins, much unlike a moderator, in a heate.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

Novus hic est disputandi ardor, nova etiam argumentandi forma, tanto subtilior quāto magis in seipsam reflexa. Nam videtur argumentari (ut loquaci loquuntur) quasi ad hominem, ex ipsis Jobi verbis & dignis. It is very common for men to grow hot in dispute, but for a man to begin his dispute with an heat, that's very strange; many have been all in a flame upon a little discourse, but to be in a flame upon the entrance of a discourse, is a thing almost unheard of. Yet thus it was with this man;

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

The Hebrew is, *his nose or nostrills were angry*. The Metaphor is taken from Horses, Bears, Lyons, Bulls, or any furious creatures, who send forth fumes of wrath or anger at their nostrills. The blood at the heart of an angered angry man is enflamed, and he, as it were, breaths out fire and smoke at his mouth and nostrills. *Elihu* came in a flame to this businesse.

How uncessant were the oppositions of *Job*! no sooner had those three men ceased speaking, but a fourth riseth up to speake. The Good.

Good man found no rest ; his three friends had their Saboth, they ceased or rested from the dispute, but *Job* was at week-day labour still, attending the words of this angry moderator. Mr. Broughton renders, *The anger of Elihu was in choler. Anger is hot, but his anger was heated*, or at least his anger was heated, yea it was not only heated as at the fire, but kindled like a fire.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu.

Anger is a fire ; and (as Solomon saith) *can a man take fire in his bosome, and not be burned ?* so I may say, can a man carry anger in his bosom, and not burne himselfe, if not others with it ? And as fire is blowne up by bellöwes, so is anger by provocation. The anger of God is expresied in a heat (*Deut. 29. 24.*) *What meaneth the heat of this great anger* (ver. 20.) *The anger of the Lord and his jealousie shall smoke against that man.* And (*Psal. 2. 12.*) *If his wrath be kindled but a little, &c.* The least sparklings of it are terrible. The anger of God is a most dreadfull fire ; and the anger of man hath much dread in it. We have need to look to our passions. Fire is good, but it must be kept in its due place ; fire on the hearth, fire in the chimney is good, but fire in the roof, or among the household stuff consumeth all. There is (as I may say) an hearth for anger where it will doe no hurt.

Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu the son of Barachel.

There are many questions about this person among the learned ; It would be too great a diversion, and possibly an unprofitable one to stay upon them. We have him here described, First, by his name. The Hebrew Etymologists say, This proper name *Elihu* signifieth, *He is my God, or my God is he.* And as he is described by his name, so by his nativity or parentage ;

Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram.

His Fathers name *Barachel*, signifies in the Hebrew, *one whom God hath blessed*, or, *the blessing of God.* The sons name was, *my God is the Lord.* And the fathers name was, *the blessing of God*, or, *one whom God hath blessed.* We may note a piece of holy devotion in the old fathers in giving significant names to their children. And surely it may be of much use to give our children

Ego curabo ne
desim nomini
Antoninorum.

good and significant names, such names as carry a remembrance of duty, or of mercy. When *Alexander the Great*, met with a common Souldier whose name was *Alexander*, He said to him, *Be sure thou doe nothing unworthy the name of Alexander*. His name had a great encouragement in it to gallantry in warre. And it is noted of *Diadumenus*, that having obtained both the Empire and the name of *Antoninus*, he said, *I will labour all I can, that I may not be injurious to the name of the Antonines*. This should be much more our care and study, where holiness makes the name honourable; *John* signifieth the grace of God; And, as I remember it is the saying of one of the ancients, concerning a bad man so called, *Thy name is John, but thou art not John*; thy name signifieth grace, but thou art not gracious. *Ambrose* said to the virgin *Agnes*, or *Anne*, *There is chastity in thy name, doe not contradict thy name*. So *Jerome* writing to *Pammachius*, which name, signifieth a fighter against all; *Do thou* (saith he) *fight against all sin, against the Devill, the world, and thy owne corruption*. The same Author writing to *Melecius*, which signifies, *Honey sweetnesse*, *Have thou* (saith he) *the sweetnesse of honey in thy manners*. And to *Probus* he writes, *Thy name signifieth honesty, Then be thou an honest man*. The Apostle exhorts (2 Tim. 2. 19.) *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity*, It is a great argument, seeing all who profess the Gospel are called Christians, from Christ, that therefore they should adorne that most worthy name by worthy walking. And let me say to all those whose names signifie any thing of God, of Grace, or goodness, ye have a good and gracious name, let not your actions be a reproach to God, nor a shame to the profession of his grace. A good heart will make a good use of every thing, and is provoked to have more then a name for that grace or goodness which is in his name, even to be really that which his name is. How should an *Elihu*, whose name signifies *He is my God*, labour after this holy assurance that *God is his*? How should a *Barachel*, whose name signifieth the *Blessing of God*, be alwayes praying and waiting for the blessing of God, or returning praise to God (both in heart and life) for all his blessings?

Elihu the son of Barachel

The Buzite.

Here *Elihu* is described by his family, as before by his father.

The

The *Buzite*, that is, coming from *Buz*. Yet there is a difference about that, some say he had that name from the place where he dwelt; we read (*Jer. 25. 23.*) of a place called *Buz*. Others say, he was called the *Buzite* from the name of his family; As he descended from *Buz* the son of *Nabor* *Abrahams* brother (*Gen. 22. 21.*) *Milcah* hath borne children unto thy brother *Nabor*, *Huz* his first born and *Buz* his brother. Master Broughton is cleare in it, who gives this glossie upon the text; *Elihu* the *Buzite*, of *Buz* *Abrahams* brothers son of the family of *Ram*, famous then for knowledge. *Rebecca* and *Jacob* seeme to have left religion in *Nahors* house. Thus saith he. *Jerome* saith, *Elihu* was descended from the second son of *Milcah*, whom the *Septuagint* call *Bauz*, from him was wast: *Heb. su-* *Balaam* the sorcerer, who according to the Tradition of the *Jewes* per *Genesim*. was this *Elihu* spoken of in the book of *Job*, at first, an holy man and a Prophet, but afterwards an apostate. But I leave that as a Rabbinicall Tradition.

We have yet a further description of *Elihu* in the Text.

Of the kindred of Ram, of the family or posterity of Ram.

Who this *Ram* was is much controverted by Interpreters; nor is the controversie yet ended who this *Ram* was. Some say he was that *Ram* spoken of (*Ruth 4. 19.*) But it is not likely, that he was so ancient as *Job*, or if he were, he would not leave the *Israelites* (from whom *Pharez* was descended) to dwell among the *Edomites*. Others say he was that *Aram* mentioned (*Gen. 22. 21.*) But neither doth this appeare true; for then *Elihu* could not be a *Buzite*, but must draw his line from *Kemuel* the brother of *Buz*. The Chaldee Paraphrase tells us, he was *Abraham*. And to cleare this 'tis said (as our owne learned Annotators have given it) that he had a threefold gradation in his name; First, he was called only *Ram*, which signifieth high; Secondly, *Abram*, which signifieth *A high father*; Thirdly, *Abraham*, which signifieth *the high father of a multitude*. But, upon which to determine I conceive it impossible, nor is there any great matter in it. Only this seemes cleare, that the family of *Ram* was some great and illustrious family in those times; and we may take notice how distinct and punctuall the penman of this book was in describing the pedigree of *Elihu*. And there may be two reasons why the Spirit of God directed him to be so; First, because he was but a young

Apparet, quod sicut Eliu dicitur Buzitis quia originem traxit ex Buz; ita dicitur de Rati ratione maternae originis. Melcha enim mater Buz fuit filia Aram unde et 70 loco Ram legunt Aram. Proinde sicut tres reges visiaverunt Job causa amicitiae, ita Eliu causa cognationis, de qua vendicavit sibi in Job plusculum audacioris licentiae. Ianson: Quis iste fuerit, quaerunt interpretes. Grimaticci certant. & adhuc sub iudice lis est. Drus.

Neutra sententia accederem, sed Ram alium quempiam fuisse putarim vivum celebrem et clarum ex familia Nabor. Merc: young man; And therefore as *Saul* (*1 Sam.* 17. 56.) when he saw *David* a young man, he asked after his parentage; *Enquire whose Son this stripling is*; I would faine know his kindred. So the kindred of *Elihu* is thus distinctly set downe, that he who by reason of his youth was little knowne as to his person, might be the better knowne by his Ancestors, or parentage.

Secondly, His parentage is thus distinctly set downe, to assure us, that this is a true history; For some have made the whole booke of *Job* to be but a parable, asserting there was no such reall thing. But this one passage gives an undeniable prooffe, that this was a reall history, and the matter really acted. This person being described by his owne name and his fathers name, and the next of his kindred.

From the consideration of the person who carried on so great a part in this businesse, *Elihu, the son of Barachel the Buzite of the kindred of Ram*, who was of a strange Country, and if allyed to *Abraham*, yet at a great distance; we may observe;

God did preserve a seed of religion, and of holy men to maintaine his truth among those who lived in darke places, and were wrapt up in many errors and superstitions.

This was also noted from the first words of this booke, *There was a man in the Land of Uz*; A man of gracious accomplishments and of a heavenly light. Here also was *Elihu the Buzite*, A man that had great knowledge about holy things (as we shall see afterwards) in those parts and times when and where abundance of darknesse, blindnesse and ignorance reigned.

Having thus described *Elihu*; The history proceeds.

Against Job was his wrath kindled, because he justified himselfe rather then God.

In the former part of the verse it is said; *Then was kindled the wrath of Elihu*; Not specifying against whom, nor the cause why; here he doubles the same words, with an addition, first, of the person with whom he was angry; *Against Job was his wrath kindled*. And as he tells us the marke or object of his wrath; so he gives, secondly, the reason of it; *Because he justified himself rather then God*. Before I come to the explication of this latter branch, take these two brief notes.

First,

First, *A godly man in maintaining a good cause, may give just reason of anothers passion or anger.*

Job was a good man, and his cause was good, yet you see a wise and a good mans wrath is kindled. *Paul* and *Barnabas* were two good men, yet a difference arose between them (*Acts* 15. 39.) *And the contention was so sharp between them that they departed asunder.*

Secondly, Considering the cause of this anger in generall, *Because he justified himselfe rather then God*; we see it was an anger for Gods cause.

Hence note;

Anger for God or in the cause of God is holy anger.

Though for the most part the flesh or our carnall corruption is the cause of anger, and it begins at selfe; yet sometimes it is stir'd in the cause of God. It is said of *Moses*, the meekest man on earth (*Numb.* 12. 3.) that when he saw the idolatry of the people (*Exod.* 32. 19.) *His anger waxed hot*; He was so angry that he cast the Tables of the Law which God had written with his own hand, out of his hand and broke them. It is said (*Mar.* 3. 5.) *Iesus Christ looked about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardnesse of their hearts*; He also exprest a great deale of zealous anger (*Joh.* 2. 15.) *When he made a whip of small cords,*

and drove the buyers and sellers out of the Temple. Some of the Hebrews tell us, that the word here used for anger, signifieth anger carried out to the destruction of sin, and that is a very gracious anger. There are two things which exceedingly declare the holiness of a mans spirit. First, when he can patiently beare loads of evils and wrongs in his owne cause, or which have but a private respect. Secondly, When he is ready to take fire in the cause of God; many dull and sluggish foules can beare God abused, and their spirits stirre no more then a stone; *Elihu* was angry, but it was in the cause of God; or, *Because Job Justified himselfe rather then God.* When we are angry with sin, we are angry (as the Apostle adviseth us to be) and *sin not*. That's anger without sin, when we are angry with sin; and are stirred up to oppose and suppress the pride and insolency of mans spirit or speeches against God; To be angry for our owne honour, and interest, or

Courd,

EN id ge-
nus ira norat,
quo fertur qui
ad abolitionem
peccati, cum quo
si sit veritas pu-
rissimus effe-
ctus est. Coc:
Hoc probes ab-
negationem tui
mundi, si in-
juriarum ferens
sis, peccatum
autem ferre non
possis; idq; ira
ut non ad vin-
dicandum sed
ad emendandum
estimularis.

Gourd, is an argument of undue love to selfe. When God spared *Nineveh* the Prophet was exceeding angry (*Jon.* 4. 1.) But his was sinfull anger ; because he was angry for his owne sake, fearing to be called a false Prophet ; He set himselfe downe to see what would become of the City, that he might have a personall glory, and be cryed up for a Prophet indeed. And when God had smitten his Gourd, he was angry and angry *unto the death* (ver. 8.) and all because he missed that which pleased himselfe. Many can be angry when they themselves are discredited, but when dishonour is cast upon God, or his interest slighted, how quiet and tame, how cold and dull are their spirits ! The anger of this man was a noble anger, as to the occasion and rise of it, *Jobs* selfe-justification, or

Because he justified himselfe rather then God.

This is a high poynt, and may justly provoke our anger, *Elihu* was not angry with *Job* because he justified himselfe against his friends, but because he justified himselfe rather then God.

Here a question will arise, and it will ask some paines to determine it ; Was this true ? did *Job* justifie himselfe rather then God ? Was it possible *Job* should do so ? I shall give only a generall answer to this question ; *Job* did not justifie himself rather then God, either explicite, or intentionally, but by consequents he did. And though it be granted that *Job* gave just occasion of this sharp reproofe by his rash and passionate speeches, uttered in the heate of dispute, and in the grief of his heart, yet it cannot be denied that *Elihu* did somewhat strain *Jobs* words, though not beyond their sence, yet beyond his sence, and gave them the hardest interpretation (somewhat beside the rule of charity) which they could beare, nor did he observe that meeknesse and moderation which might well have become him, to a man in that case. *O how hard is it not to offend or doe ill, while we are doing well !*

To cleare this a little further consider , There is a twofold straining of words ; First, beyond the sence of the words spoken ; Secondly, beyond the sence of the speaker. I doe not say *Elihu* in affirming this of *Job*, strained his words beyond their sence, but he strained them beyond *Jobs* sence. *Job* spake words which might lay him under this censure, that he justified himselfe rather then God ; But this was far from his intention ; For doubtlesse he
had

had rather a thousand times his tongue should have been cut out of his mouth, then to justifie himselfe with it rather then God, or to speak a word to the disparagement of Gods Justice. So then it was hard for *Elihu* to charge *Job* thus, though *Job* had let fall some inconsiderate speeches, which administred occasion for such a charge. And as one of the Ancients speakes of difficulties and seeming contradictions in Scripture ; *Distinguish the times, and the Scriptures will accord* ; So distinguish the time of this dispute, take *Job* at the beginning of it, before he was teazed and heated by his friends, and then he spake at a very low rate of himselfe ; *If I were righteous I would not know my owne soule*. But in the heat and towards the later end of this long dispute, *Job* gave too much advantage for such a construction to be put upon his words, that *he justified himselfe rather then God* ; then which nothing can be said more unjustifiable, nor more reproveable.

Hence observe ;

To justifie our selves doth usually and justly lay us open to the reproofe of others ; or, To justifie our selves, drawes blame upon our selves.

To justifie, is foure wayes used in Scripture.

First, (which is the most remarkable and excellent act of it) God justifieth man (*Rom. 8. 33.*) *It is God that justifieth*. This act of divine Grace consists in two things ; First, in the imputation of Christs righteousness to us ; Secondly, in the free remission of our sins.

Secondly, Man justifieth God (*Luk. 7. 29, 30.*) *And all the people that heard him, and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with the Baptisme of John*. Where to justifie imports as much as to Glorifie doth, (*Acts 13. 48.*) *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord* ; That is, they readily approved and received the word of the Lord ; when we approve the Doctrine, and doings of God, his word and works, then we justifie him. And how ready should we be on all occasions to justifie God, who only is and is altogether good, when he is so graciously ready to justifie us who are evill, altogether evill and ungodly.

Thirdly, We read in Scripture of man justifying man, which is done any of these three wayes.

D

First,

First, He that consents to what another hath done (though the deed be evill) justifieth him in doing it. A secret liking of any mans action is (as much as that amounts to) the justification of his person.

Secondly, He that openly approveth or applaudeth what another hath done, justifieth him much more. To consent with sinners is sinfull, to flatter them in their sin is abominable.

Thirdly, He that stands up to maintaine and defend what another hath done, justifies him most of all. All these acts of justification *Job* denied his friends, while he said (*Chap. 27. 5.*) *God forbid I should justifye you* ; That is, that I should secretly consent to or openly approve and maintaine what you have said concerning me, or you in saying it.

Fourthly, The same man is said to justifye himselfe ; this selfe-justification is that which kindled the wrath of *Elihu* against *Job* ; The text is expresse ; *Because he justified himselfe, &c.* This justification of our selves is of two sorts.

First, Internall and mentall ; when in our hearts we give sentence for, or approve of our selves ; when we inwardly boast and glory of our selves, whether in what we are, or in what we doe and asseme. The Pharisee (*Luk. 18. 11.*) *stood and prayed thus with himselfe* (or to himselfe, that is, silently) *God I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publicane ; I fast twice in the weeke, &c.* Thus he justified himselfe.

Secondly, There is an externall and vocall selfe-justification, when we openly commend, and cry up our selves ; Thus *Jehu* justified himselfe (*2 Kings 10. 16.*) *Come see my zeale for the Lord* ; He would needs blow a trumpet, and proclaime before all men how good a man he was, and what good he had done.

Yet further, the justification of our selves is two-fold.

First, Lawfull, yea and commendable ; Take that in two particulars.

First, That man who is really and indeed in a justified state, through the free grace of God in Christ, he, when a just occasion is offered, may justifye himselfe declaratively before men ; For as we ought alwayes to justifye our selves declaratively by our works, that is, give evidence by our workes that we are justified by faith ; so we may justifye our selves by our words, to magnifie
the

the rich grace of God in justifying us freely through Christ. *David* called others to take notice of what God had done for his soule, (*Psal. 66. 16.*) Thus a beleever may lawfully at any time, and at all times, it is his duty to justifie himselfe before men, by giving as the Apostle directs (*1 Pet. 3. 15.*) *an answer to every one that asketh a reason of the hope that is in him, (that is, of his justified state) with meekeuess and feare.*

Secondly, A man that is sound at heart, honest and upright with God, may lawfully justifie himselfe, as to the integrity of his intentions, purposes, and designes, when he falls under other mens jealousies and suspicions. *David* being often unjustly condemned by *Saul*, was as often in this worke of justifying himselfe against him, (*Psal. 7. 8.*) *Judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousnessse, and according to mine integrity that is in me;* As if he had said, I am judged unrighteously, but I appeale to thy righteous judgement, who fully knowest (which I also know, my conscience bearing witness) mine integrity. I appeale to thy mercy for the many sins which I have committed against thy selfe, but I appeale to thy Justice whether (as I am accused) I have at all sinned against *Saul*. We may reade *Paul* doing the same at large while he professed (*1 Thes. 2. 3, 4.*) that he did not act upon covetous designes for himselfe, nor was a flatterer of others, but as he was allowed of God to be put in trust with the Gospel, even so he spake, not as pleasing men but God, which tryeth the heart. As it was the continuall practise of false Apostles and others to discredit *Pauls* Ministry, by bringing his person out of credit, so it was his continuall care to counter-worke them, by a professed vindication of himselfe. We may lawfully justifie our selves and our actings, when we are not only suspected, but falsly accused, and wrongfully charged about them, and that either of these two ways.

First, When we are charged to have done that evill, which we never did, then we may justifie our selves by a flat deniall; *David* did so in that case (*Psal. 7. 3, 4.*) *O Lord my God, if I have done this, if there be iniquity in my hand, &c.* As if he had said, O God, thou knowest I have not done this which many burden me with. Again (*Psal. 35. 11.*) *False witnessse did rise up, they laid to my charge things that I knew not;* I have not had so much as a thought to do that which they say I have actually done.

Thus he discharged himselfe of those crimes, which indeed he never committed nor was guilty of.

Secondly, We may justifie our selves lawfully, when the good we have done is charged upon us as an evill deed, or we looked upon as evill doers, when we have done, nothing for the matter, but our duty, and that in the manner according to rule. Thus when *Paul* had justified himselfe, by denying the evill which *Tertullus* accused him of, (*Acts* 24. 12, 13.) he presently justified himselfe also in what he had done well, though his enemies judged it evill (*ver.* 14.) *But this I confesse, that after the way which they call heresie, so worship I the God of my fathers, beleeving all things which are written in the Law and the Prophets.* This selfe-justification is often very needfull; For as there are some who call evill good, so there are others, who call good evill, and make that a mans fault which is his commendation. It was accounted a crime by some of old to be lesse vicious then others, and it is accounted a crime by some at this day to be more vertuous then others; to be more holy, more exact, more wisely precise and circumspect in our wayes then others, many interpret folly, and stamp with madnesse. (*2 Corinth.* 5. 13.) *Paul* was thought beside himselfe, a meere Fanaticke in his high actings for Jesus Christ; when our actions are thus mis-represented, and put under such disguises, every good man is obliged to doe himselfe right. For as we may honestly accuse others, and declare the evill that we know they have done, when called to it; so we may speak out and declare the good we have done, & maintaine that to be good (if it be good) which we have done, (though many call it evill) when called to it. Thus a man may stand upon his termes with all men, and yet be humble, and deeply sensible of his owne sinfullnesse and vilenesse before God. *Paul* saw nothing, upon the matter, but sin in himselfe (*Rom.* 7. 14, 24.) *When I would doe good, evill is present with me; O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death; That is, of sin; as 'tis called* (*Rom.* 6. 6.) Thus he spake when he had to doe with God; But when he had to doe with men, when he saw himselfe called to answer the accusations, and wipe off the aspersions which the enemies of the Gospel cast upon him. (*1 Corinth.* 4. 4.) then he saith, *I know nothing* (that is, no evill) *by my selfe.* *Paul* was very conscious of his naturall infirmity, yet very confident of his spiri-

spirituall integrity. And therefore when he saw the Glory of God was like to be obliured through his abasement, and to be eclipsed by the shadowes and darknesse which men cast upon his Ministry, then he tooke due honour to himselfe, and made the most of himselfe, according to truth, in the eyes of all the world. Thus I have shewed what justifying of our selves is lawfull, and I have done it that we may more clearly discern, what I am to thew next, or

Secondly, Namely, what that justifying of our selves is, which indeed is unlawfull, reprobable and blame-worthy; I shall instance it in a few particulars.

First, They justifie themselves sinfully, who doe good with a desire to be seene and applauded of men for it; thus Christ charged the Pharisees (*Math: 6. 5.*) *They pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seene of men:* and (*ver: 16.*) *They disfigure their faces, that they may appeare unto men to fast.* It is not a sin to be seene of men in doing good, but to doe good to be seene of men is sinfull, and the patching up of a selfe-justification.

Secondly, They justifie themselves sinfully, who would pretend, or seeme to have done that good, which indeed they have not. There is as much of this hypocrisie lodging and working now in the hearts of the children of men, as was of old in the heart of *Saul* (*1 Sam: 15. 13, 14.* to the 22d verse) who professed highly to have fulfilled the will of God to a haire breadth; *Blessed be thou of the Lord* (said he to *Samuel*) *I have performed the commandment of the Lord*; Thus he insisted upon his integrity, and justified himselfe to the face of *Samuel*, who quickly convinced him that he had done the Lords worke to halves.

Thirdly, They justifie themselves sinfully, who either totally deny, or extenuate and lessen the evill that they have done; this kinde of sinfull selfe-justification was opened largely at the 33d verse of the former Chapter, upon that imprecation made by *Job*, *If I covered my transgression as Adam, by hiding mine iniquity in my bosome.* I referre the Reader thither for a fuller discovery of it.

Fourthly, They justifie themselves sinfully, who mingle their owne workes with the workes or righteousness of *Jesus Christ* for justification; for though such pretend to *Christ*, and say they take

take up Christ and his righteousness for justification, yet it will be found a selfe-justification only; seeing unlesse Christ justifie us wholly, he justifieth us not at all; As the Apostle concludes (*Galat. 5. 4.*) *Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the Law; ye are fallen from grace*; That is, yee who mingle your workes with Grace, are not justified by Grace, but (which will be (unlesse repented of) your condemnation) by your workes.

Lastly, They justifie themselves sinfully, who say they are justified by Christ from their sins, while they continue in their sins, and hold fast their iniquities; For as they that mingle their owne good workes with the righteousness of Christ, are selfe-justifiers, so also are they that take hold of the righteousness of Christ, while they will not let goe, nor part with their evill workes. To looke for justification while we continue in the love and practise of any knowne sin and unrighteousnesse, is as sinfull as to expect justification by our owne righteousness.

Object. But doth not the Scripture say, that *God justifieth the ungodly* (*Rom. 4. 5.*)

I answer, Though God justifieth the ungodly, yet the justified are not ungodly; God justifieth the ungodly and makes them holy by the grace of sanctification, as well as righteous by the grace of justification: righteousness of life is alwayes the fruit of righteousness by faith. Therefore if any man continuing in any knowne sin, saith he is justified, he hath justified himselfe, for none doe so who are justified of God. O how deeply are they condemned by God who thus justifie themselves! Nothing is more desirable then to be justified by God, and nothing is more dangerous then to justifie our selves, either by our owne righteousness, or in our unrighteousnesse. Now as to justifie our selves any of these wayes, is exceeding sinfull before God, so to justifie our selves any way, layeth us open or obnoxious to the censures of men. And that's the reason why this holy man *Job* was so deeply censured; For though he justified not himselfe in any of those fences which are sinfull, yet he did some way justifie himselfe, and while he justified himselfe only as he might, he was condemned as having justified himselfe in a way which he might nor. We had need be very cautious, how we any way or in any kinde justifie our selves, few having done it without incurring censure, if not condemnation from others.

But

But what was *Jobs* ſelfe-juſtification, or of what kinde, that it raiſed ſuch a duſt, yea kindled ſuch a flame of Anger in the breaſt of *Elihu*? I anſwer;

Job did not juſtifie himſelfe by lyes or falſhoods; that was not the matter for which *Elihu* was angry with *Job*, but becauſe he ſuppoſed he was more tender of his owne name then of Gods. Thus the Text ſpeakes expreſſely; *Againſt Job was his wrath kindled, becauſe he juſtified himſelfe rather then God.*

Hence note;

To juſtifie our ſelves rather then God, is not only ſinfull but flagitious, not only ſinfull but blaſphemous.

Let God be true and every man a lyar (Rom. 3. 4.) woe to thoſe who goe about to ſave their owne honour, by ſpeaking that which reflects diſhonour upon God, or who keepe their owne credit untoucht, by expoſing his to any hazzard; let God be juſt and every man unrighteous. As whoſoever exalts himſelfe, humbles God (when we exalt our ſelves vainely, we humble God as much as we can, and ſo it will be interpreted) ſo he that juſtifies himſelfe in any degree unduely accuſeth God, how much more he that juſtifieth himſelfe rather then God. To commend or praiſe our ſelves, in the hearing of men, is unfavory, to commend or praiſe our ſelves rather then men (who are our fellowes, yea though our inferiors) is odious, how much more to juſtifie our ſelves rather then God, who is infinitely above us. It becomes the beſt of men, to accuſe, judge and condemne themſelves, to draw up their owne enditement, and ſay, we have deſerved worſe then we ſuffer from the hand of God; and have done leſſe then duty requires at our hand.

But, becauſe to juſtifie our ſelves rather then God, is a thing ſo horrid, few will be brought under this conviction, that they are guilty of it, or chargeable with it. And therefore I ſhall endeavour to make it appeare, that there are many who though they doe not juſtifie themſelves rather then God directly and bare-faced, yet they doe it ſecretly or conſtructively. I ſhall make out this in generall as it may concern any man, while I more diſtinctly ſhew, how *Job* incurred this ſuſpition, and gave *Elihu* more then a probable ground to ſay, that he juſtified himſelfe rather then God. *Job* never ſaid, he was more juſt then God, but he ſaid.

said many things which gave *Elihu* occasion to say, That surely he justified himselfe rather then God.

First, When he spake so largely of his own innocency, spending five whole Chapters in the vindication of it, and spake so little, comparatively, of the righteousness and justice of God, this might bring him under a suspicion of justifying himselfe rather then God. For what could this intimate to his hearers, but that he had better performed the part of a gracious and righteous man, then God had of a gracious Father or righteous Judge. Though all that be true (how much soever it is) which we speak of our selves, yet it is not good to speak much, much lesse all of our selves; especially when upon that account, we may seeme to dispute either the justice or goodnesse of God in dealing out the troubles and afflictions, under which we suffer.

Secondly, While *Job* did so often and so boldly offer to plead his cause before Gods tribunall, and was so importunate for a Hearing, this carried a secret implication, that God had not dealt well with him, or at least had not considered his cause thoroughly, for if he had, surely he should have found more favorable dealing from God then he dayly experienced.

Thirdly, While *Job* complained so often and greatly of the greatnesse of his afflictions, of the weight and heaviness of the hand of God upon him, and, that he being but a poore worme, the great and mighty God should stretch out his strong hand against him; This also might be construed, as if he thought God did not take a due measure of his infirmities, but let temptations take hold of him which were not common to man, and burdened him beyond what he was able to beare. Now, what was this, but to justify himselfe rather then God?

Fourthly, While he complained that the hand of God had not only touched him, but even abode and dwelt upon him, that he was consumed from morning to morning, that he had not only wearisome nights, but moneths of vanity appointed to him, that his afflictions were not only exceeding sharpe, but exceeding long, yea that though they were extreemly violent, yet perpetuall, this bare hard upon the goodness and wisdom of God. For, to say that God over-acts in the measure, and exceeds in the continuance of our afflictions, reflect alike upon the honour of God, and are rather a justification of our selves in bearing the crosse, then of God in laying it onn.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *Job* in severall passages of this booke desired God to make an end of him, and take him out of this world; he was troubled that God did not kill him out of hand, or out-right; this was a justification of himselfe rather then God, as if he knew better, whether it were more fit for him to live in a sickly, weakly, painfull condition, or to be delivered out of it by death. As we should be willing to die, when God calls, so to live till God calls, and not to hasten death; He that beleeves (as he ought) will not make hast out of the troubles of this world, much lesse out of the world, because he finds it troublesome.

Sixthly, He seemed to justifie himselfe rather then God, while he was so much troubled, because God did not presently reveale to him the reason of his troubles; *Why is light given to a man whose way is hid, and whom God hath hedged in?* was his complaint (Chap. 3. 23.) that is, wherefore is the light of this naturall life given to me, whose way is in the darke, and who know not the reason why I am thus afflicted? We ought to sit downe in this assurance, be our condition never so restless, that the most wise God hath a reason for every stroake of trouble he layeth upon our loynes, though we see it not. They who cannot fully resigne themselves and their wayes to God, yea resolve their wills into the will of God, are much disquieted and restless in their minds, when they see not the reason of Gods dealing with them; or why it is so with them? Let all such know, this also is to make our selves wiser then God, and to justifie our selves rather then him. And therefore from all these considerations take these two Inferences, which may keepe us ever at a distance from this high presumption, yea (which we should carefully avoyd) from the shadow and appearance of it; The justifying of our selves rather then God.

First, It is enough to condemne us under the guilt of this sin, if we allow not all that God doth to be good, yea and best for us, how much or how long, or in what kinde soever he is pleased to afflict us with evill. It is our duty to accept, that is, to take well at Gods hand, *the punishment of our iniquity* (Lev: 26. 41.) how much more to welcome the sorest and heaviest crosse which he is pleased to lay upon us, either for the chastisement of our saylings and falls, or for the tryall and exercise of our graces. It is said (2 Sam: 3. 36.) *Whatsoever the king* (meaning David)

vid) did, pleased all the people; There was a wonderfull consent and harmony between the peoples spirit and *Davids* actions; Surely whatsoever God doth, should please all his people, what ever he dispenseth, be it sweet or savre, hard or soft, light or darknesse, it should please all his people, and please them highly; and so farre as we come short of this frame of heart, so farre doe we justifie our selves rather then God.

Secondly, *It is a fault not only if we are not satisfied and pleased with what God doth; but if we doe not praise and glorifie God in and for what he doth; and that not only in his justice that he hath done us no wrong, but in his goodnesse, that he hath done all for our profit.* That which turnes to mans profit, should also turne to the praise of God; But (as the holy Apostle assureth us, *Heb. 12. 10.*) God chastneth his children for *their profit* (and that the best and noblest profit) *that they might be partakers of his holiness*; therefore we ought to praise and glorifie him, or to glorifie him with our praises while he is chastning us. *Truly God is good to Israel* (*Psal. 73. 1.*) He is so, not only when he gives *Israel* outward good things, or things good to sense, but when he afflicts, when he writes bitter things against his *Israel*, and shewes them only visions of sorrow and matter of amazement. Till our soules are wrought up to this Justification of God in his goodnesse, when things are worst with us, we in some degree justifie our selves rather then God.

Againe, for as much as *Job*, who cannot in all things be acquitted from this charge of justifying himselfe rather then God, was yet of another spirit and principle, then indeed or professedly to justifie himselfe rather then God.

Observe;

We may speake amisse and wrong God when we doe not intend it, nor have the least thought to doe so.

David prayeth for the pardon of unknowne sins (*Psal. 19. 12, 13.*) *Cleanse thou me from secret faults, keepe backe thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me.* To justifie our selves rather then God knowingly, is a presumptuous sin, to lay any blame upon God directly is blasphemy; *David* prayed not only to be kept from such grosse sins, but to be cleansed from secret sins, that is, from those sins which he did not know.

know that he had committed them, and which he never had any intent to commit. We may so mis-place words and mis-guide actions, when we thinke not of it, that we may quickly sin against God, yea and justifie our selves rather then God ; That which we doe or speake is to be judged by a rule, whether it be good or evil, not meere by our intentions though good, nor by our not intending of evil. We may be judged to have done or said *evil*, though we meant no evil in doing or in saying so. Words and actions well meant may sometimes justly undergoe an ill construction. They that heare should interpret every word in the most favorable sence ; but if we speake unwarily and unsafely, or (as *Moses* once) *unadvisedly with our lips*, we may thanke our selves if we fall under reproofe for what we have spoken. Therefore begge of God to set a watch over your mouth, and to keepe the doore of your lips, let nothing passe unexamined. 'Tis our wisdom to read every word over and over before we speake it ; Many heare ill, who have spoken well, how much more may they who speake doubtfully or dangerously. We have seene the cause why *Elihu* was so angry with *Job*, the next verse will tell us why he was so angry with *Jobs* three friends.

Vers. 3. *Also against his three friends was his wrath kindled, because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.*

We find *Elihu* angry on all hands, angry with *Job*, and angry with his three friends ; some querie upon this renewing of his anger (as God did *Jonah*) whether he did well to be thus angry or thus to appeare in passion, and breake out afresh in wrath ? and whether the reasons of his anger will beare him out to have been angry with Reason ; anger prevailes most in those in whom reason prevailes least, and they have usually the strongest passions, who have the weakest judgements ; children and aged persons, the sicke and pained are apt to be angry with others, and hard to be pleased themselves. And 'tis a generall axiom ; *The weakke and Invalidū omne impotent are naturally angry and passionate.* Therefore we had natura querulum est. need looke to our passions, that they grow not strong, for they will soone proclaime us weakke : he is a wise man indeed, that can be at once wise and angry. (*Proverbs* 19. 11.) *The discretion of a man deferreth his anger, and it is his glory to passe over, a transgression ;*

gression ; And as there *Solomon* teacheth us, that discretion mitereth anger, so he assureth us, that angry persons are more then indilcreete, foolish. (*Eccles. 7. 9.*) *Anger resteth in the bosome of fooles.* Anger often assaults the prudent, but if it abides and takes up its lodging in any bosome, 'tis in the botome of a foole, at least, in that poynt, he doth foolishly who lendeth his bosome (though but one night) for anger to lodge in. And as at all times, so then especially we should narrowly watch and severely bridle our passions, when (as *Elihu* here did) we undertake to advise those who are mistaken, or to reduce those that are out of the way ; when we give counsel to others, we should be sedate and quiet our selves. A Physician must not be angry with his patient, nor is it proper to apply medicinall healing counsel to the mind of another with an exulcerated minde. Much might be said concerning this anger of *Elihu*, but I have spoken to that before in opening the former verse, therefore I shall not stay here upon it ; but proceed to consider the reason why he was so.

Because they had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.

Not to find an answer may proceed ;

First, From a defect of paines and industry in seeking it ; An answer must be sought and digg'd for, it must be studied and prayed for, else it will not be found.

Secondly, The not finding of an answer, may arise from the defect of ability, not of industry ; many labour hard, but can make nothing of it ; 'Tis probable *Jobs* three friends laboured much, yet found no answer ; And then it was no defect of industry but of ability, they found no answer, because they could not. They (as we commonly speake) did even beate their braines, and bite their nayles for an answer, but could not attaine it, they pumpt hard, but the water would not come, God hid the thing from their eyes ; so then, they had not found any answer, because after all their search they could not ; nor should it seeme strange to us that they could not. At best we know but in part here, and till God by his Spirit teach us, we know nothing at all ; So that I say, it should not seeme strange to us, that these wise and good men could find no answer for *Job*, but that which follows seemes strange, even to amazement, that though they could not, yet

(which,

(which, how also could they answer to their owne consciences!)

had condemned Job.

What, condemne a man, and not answer him? 'tis worse then to condemne a man, and not heare him. Possibly he that is condemned unheard, may yet deserve a condemnation; But if we condemne a man unanswered, he certainly, as to us, is condemned undeservedly. And therefore this course of proceeding (if any) is liable not only to suspicion whether it be right, but to condemnation as utterly unrighteous. Though it may be a good mans case not to find an answer, yet surely a good man will not condemne when he cannot answer.

But it may be demanded; Did *Jobs* friends indeed find no answer before they condemned him? we have heard of their answers all along. No sooner had *Job* ended his former speeches, but they presently answered (*Chap. 4. 1.*) Then *Eliphaz the Temanite* answered and said (*Chap. 8. 1.*) Then answered *Bildad the Shuhite* and said (*Chap. 11. 1.*) Then answered *Zophar the Naamathite* and said; yea they all three answered *Job* a second time, and two of them a Third, how then could *Elihu* justly say, *they found no answer, and yet had condemned Job?*

For answer to this objection; I say, They answered *Job*, but they did not answer sufficiently. The vulgar latine translation puts this glosse (which is more then the rules of translation allow) into the text, rendring the originall thus; *Because they had found no ratiſonall answer, and yet had condemned Job.* They did not find out nor hit upon the right answer. Improper and insufficient answers, how many soever of them we heape up against any mans argument, are no answers, they are not worthy to be called answers. That only is an answer which carrieth a conviction in it, which reacheth the state and strength of the question, or removeth the objection. In this sence *Jobs* three friends *had found no answer, and yet had condemned Job.*

The Hebrew is *they made him wicked*, or condemned him as a wicked man. So the Septuagint, *they had no answer for him, and yet concluded him wicked*; we say, *they had condemned Job*; and the reason of it is, because to condemne a man is to leave him under a supposal of wickednesse, and to stigmatize or brand him for a wicked man. All the wicked shall at last be condemned, and

Ed quod non
invenissent re-
sponſionem ra-
tionalem.
Vulg:

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וַיִּשְׁפֹּט
Sept: & po-
ſuerunt eum
eſſe impium.

none.

none ought to be condemned, nor are any condemned justly now but the wicked ; *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination to the Lord, (Pro. 17. 15.)* There is a very elegant transposition of the words in the Hebrew ; we may render the text thus ; *He that justifieth the wicked, and wickedeth the just, &c.* The law of *Moses* gave an expresse rule against this perversion of Judgement, in termes quite crosse to those in *Solomon* (Deut: 25. 1.) *If there be any controversy between men, and they come unto Judgement, that the Judges may Judge them, then they shall justifie the righteous, and condemne the wicked.* Which you may render thus ; *They shall justifie the just, and wickedise the wicked,* that is, they shall declare the just man just, and the wicked man to be wicked. That man either really is, or is accounted wicked, who is cast in his cause and condemned. That was a dreadfull sentence (the Scripture (Acts 1. 20.) shewes it fulfilled upon the traytor *Judas*) *when he is judged, let him be condemned* (Psal. 109. 7.) we put in the margin, *let him goe out guilty or wicked.* In this sence *Jobs* three friends when they condemned him, cast him as a wicked man, though they had nothing to answer the plea which he made for his owne integrity. We must not conceive any such wickednesse in them, that they were resolved to condemne him right or wrong, yet they held their conclusion against the light and reason of all his premises, and though they could prove no ill against him, yet vehemently suspecting him, they concluded he was an ill man, and so condemned him.

*Damnavunt pro
impio, etsi nulla
in eum crimina
probare possent
quibus ille su-
am vitam con-
taminaissent.*

Merc:

Hence note first.

Some will proceed to condemne both persons and opinions, though they can give no reasonable account why they condemne either.

We read (Isa. 56. 10.) of *dumbe doggs, that cannot barke,* that is, who know not what to speake or say to purpose. There are many who (in this sence) cannot barke, yet they will bite ; and when they have no answer, they will condemne ; and usually dumbe doggs that cannot barke have the sharpest teeth, and are best at biting, or they are better at condemning then at answering. As some finde an answer where there is none ; that is, when such reasons are layd before them as are unanswerable, yet they will not give over answering, but still seek a knott in a rush, and draw

draw the saw of contention as well without end as without cause ; so others cannot find an answer where it is ; yet when they cannot answer , they can censure and condemne him for wicked or perverse , whom they cannot prove so . 'Tis much easier to say a man is faulty , then to find his fault ; yet they who have a mind to find faults , are seldome to seeke for somewhat or other which they call so .

Note secondly.

To condemne opinions or persons when we cannot answer them, is a practise justly condemnable.

'Tis unjust (as was intimated before) to condemne a man before he is heard . For though possibly a man unheard may have justice when he is condemned , yet all agree 'tis injustice to condemne him when he is not heard ; Now if it be injustice to condemne a wicked man before he is heard , how unjust is it to condemne a man in whom we can find no wickednesse after we have heard him .

Thirdly , From the manner of the phrase here used ,

Note.

To condemne a man is to render him wicked.

Condemnation (as was shewed) is due only to the wicked , and if an innocent be condemned , he is reputed wicked , and receives punishment as guilty . As that sentence of condemnation which proceeds out of the mouth of God against impenitent sinners and evill doers , bindes the guilt of their evill deeds upon them , and delivers them up to punishment ; so he that condemnes his brother , fastneth guilt upon him , and speakes him deserving punishment ; for as where guilt is , punishment followeth , so a fault is conceived to goe before . There are these three things in sin , the fault , the guilt , and the blot , or pollution of it ; he that fastneth guilt by condemnation , fastneth the fault and blot much more ; how sad is it then to be deservedly under condemnation ? And how great is the priviledge of beleivers , to whom (though in themselves they deserve it) *there is no condemnation !* (Rom. 8. 1.) They who in this life are past condemnation , are also passed from death to life . Many are condemned who are good in the sight of God ; but all condemnation makes a man evill , yea wicked!

ed in the sight of the world. And because every sentence of condemnation renders a man wicked in the eyes of worldly men, therefore righteous Magistrates will not condemne hastily; They will not judge (as Christ did not, *Isa. 11. 3.*) *after the sight of their eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of their eares*; To judge *by the sight of the eye*, is to Judge according to the first appearance of things, before inquisition hath been made, and to reprove *by the hearing of the eare*, is to reprove according to the first report which is made, without examination. We must not judge thus, because we must judge in righteousness, which cannot be, if we judge thus. How deliberate, how tender should we be in condemning any man, seeing condemnation doth not only impose a punishment upon, but suppose a crime, a wickednesse, a fault in him. It is grievous enough to beare punishment, but to beare the burden of a crime or fault, is in reality much more grievous.

But seeing *Elihu* declares his anger against *Jobs* three friends, because they condemned *Job*, and had found no answer. Some will say, did not *Elihu* condemne *Job* so too? No, he condemned him indeed, but he first found an answer. Again, *Elihu* condemned *Job*, but not as his friends condemned him, his friends condemned him as to his state, judging him unsound at heart; But *Elihu* condemned him only as to this or that paticular act or speech; He condemned him, First, because he spake so largely in the justification of himselfe (*Chap: 33. 8, 9, 10, 11.*) *Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voice of thy words, saying, I am clean without transgression; I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* (And *Chap. 34. 5, 6.*) *For Job hath said, I am righteous, and God hath taken away my judgement; should I lye against my right, my wound is incurable without transgression.* Secondly, he condemned him for complying with the wicked, not that he thought *Job* acted like them, but because being a godly man, he in his sufferings spake sometimes and behaved himselfe like them (*Chap. 34. 8.*) *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.* Further, he charged him with stubbornnesse against God (*Chap. 34. 37.*) *For he addeth rebellion unto his sin;* and (which sounds strangely) with an easinesse towards evill men (*Chap: 36. 17.*) *Thou hast fulfilled the judgement of the wicked, judgement and justice take hold on thee.*

Thus

Thus *Elihu* condemned *Job* many wayes, but he condemned him not, without finding an answer.

Yea, I may say, *Elihu* is he, who in this great controversie and difficulty, hath found an answer, and yet hath not condemned *Job*, that is, he hath not condemned him as his three friends had condemned him: He condemned not *Job* as one perverse and crooked in his wayes, he condemned him not as one that feared not God and eschewed not evill, He condemned him not as an hypocrite, rotten at heart and unsound in his estate; Thus *Elihu* found an answer for *Job*, but condemned him not, no not while his wrath was kindled against him, because he justified himselfe rather then God.

And the processe of this booke will shew, that though *Elihu* (in the sence spoken of) condemned not *Job*, yet he found an unanswerable answer, such an answer, as to which *Job* neither could nor would make any reply; and that is the speciall businesse we have to looke at in prosecuting his discourse, even to finde out the answer which he found; for that will be as the key of the worke, to open the whole matter to us, and to shew us wherein *Job* had either fayled or exceeded, either in bearing the crosses layd upon him by God, or in managing this controversie with his friends.

J O B. Chap. 32. Verſ. 4, 5, 6, 7.

Now Elihu had waited till Job had ſpoken : becauſe they were elder then he.

When Elihu ſaw that there was no answer in the mouth of theſe three men, then his wrath was kindled.

And Elihu the ſon of Barachel the Buzite answered and ſaid, I am young, and ye are very old, wherefore I was afraid, and durſt not ſhew you mine opinion.

I ſaid Dayes ſhould ſpeak, and multitude of yeares ſhould teach wiſdome.

THis context aſſignes the reaſon, Firſt, why *Elihu* forbore ſo long to ſpeake, namely, becauſe he was young, that reaſon you have in the 4th verſe, as alſo in the 6th and 7th. Secondly, why he began at laſt to ſpeake, namely, becauſe his elders, thoſe grave ancient men would or could ſpeake no more. This he layes downe in the 5th verſe, *When Elihu ſaw that there was no answer in the mouth of theſe three men, then &c.*

Verſ. 4. *Now Elihu had waited till Job had ſpoken.*

The Hebrew is, *He expected Job in words*; *Job* was long in words, or he ſpake long in many words; and all that while *Elihu* waited, he kept ſilent; but when *Job* had ſpoken out, and *Elihu* had ſtayd ſome time after, to ſee whether either himſelfe or his friends would ſpeak againe, then he began. *Mr. Broughton* tranſlates, *yet Elihu waited to ſpeak with Job*. The word notes the moſt patient expectation, a waiting with much long-ſufferance, a waiting alſo in much confidence, as reſerving our ſelves till better times, or for a more favourable diſpenſation. So the word is uſed (*Dan. 12. 12.*) *Bleſſed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thouſand three hundred, and five and thirty dayes*; that is, Bleſſed is he that waiteth out thoſe dayes of the Prophecy there ſpecified; he hath a ſtretched out patience, that waiteth to the very laſt

תתן *patien-*
tem expectatio-
nem ſonat, qua
duramus in ma-
liis, nos rebus
melioribus ſer-
vantes. Bold.

laſt day, and to the laſt of that day. The word is uſed againe (*Habak. 2. 3.*) *If the viſion* (that is, the mercy or deliverance revealed and promiſed) *tarry, waite for it* ; that is, if it tarry beyond the time ſuppoſed by man (it never tarryes beyond the time appointed by God) waite patiently for it, that is, for the accompliſhment of it ; yea the word implyeth a waiting, as it were, with open mouth, or gaping to receive that good which is aſſured by prophecy or in the promiſe. Such an expectation is here aſcribed to *Elihu*, he waited for the iſſue of that great and long debate between *Job* and his three friends, or he gaped for ſuch a ſolid answer as might ſariſfie him, and determine the Queſtion under debate ; *Now Elihu had waited till Job had ſpoken.*

Hence note.

Fiſt. *As it is alwayes our duty to waite on God, ſo ſometimes on men.*

We ſhould waite, Firſt, to ſee what men will doe for us ; we ſhould waite, Secondly, to heare what men have to ſay to us ; we ſhould waite for counſell, for comfort, for inſtruction, for conviction. We ſhould waite, Thirdly, to perſorme duty, and to doe good to men. Thus God is pleaſed to waite upon (his creature) man, (*Iſa. 30. 18.*) *Therefore will I waite to be gracious* ; As God waiteth to beſtow acts of grace on man, ſo man ſhould waite to perſorme offices of love and reſpect to man, or to give him advice, helpe and aſſiſtance, as his caſe and needs require.

Secondly, Conſider *Elihu* who had waited long as a hearer, was afterwards a great ſpeaker.

Hence note.

They that will ſpeak to any mans caſe rightly, muſt firſt heare him patiently.

They muſt be hearers, who would be learners ; *Paul* ſate at the ſeete of *Gamaliel*, there he waited as a learner ; And if they muſt waite as hearers, who would be learners, how much more ought they, who would be teachers, reprovers, or reformers ?

Thirdly, *Elihu* waited that he might ſpeake opportunely, or in time,

Hence note.

Due times and seasons of ſpeaking muſt be obſerved and taken.

(*Eccleſiaſtes 3. 7.*) *There is a time to ſpeak, and a time to keep ſilence.* The providences of God poſt wife men to both. And uſually times of ſilence ſit us for times of ſpeaking; *Every thing is beautifull in its ſeaſon*; words ſpoken in their ſeaſon, are not only more effectually, but more beautifull, they are *like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver*. And therefore as the wiſe man gives us caution, (*Eccleſ. 5. 2.*) *Not to be raſh with our mouths to utter any thing before God*; So we ſhould not be raſh with our mouths to utter any thing before men, but well to conſider what we have to ſay, and waite our time to ſay it. The Apoſtle James (*chap. 1. 19.*) would have us *ſwift to heare, ſlow to ſpeak*; and probably, the ſlower we are to ſpeak, the ſurer we ſpeake; *Hasty ſpeaking hath given men more dangerous ſtumbles and falls, then ever haſty going d'd.* The Prophet repreſents our Lord Jeſus Chriſt thus beſpeaking his Father as to his preparation and furniture for the exerciſe of his Propheticall, yea of his whole Mediatoriall office (*Iſa. 50. 4.*) *Thou haſt given me the tongue of the learned that I might know how to ſpeake a word in ſeaſon.* As there is much wiſdome in hitting the matter what to ſpeak, and the manner of ſpeaking, how to cloath and dreſſe the matter of our ſpeech; ſo there is much wiſdome in hitting the time and ſeaſon when to ſpeake. And as to time a thing well in acting, ſo to time it well in tpeaking, is the better halfe of it. *Elihu waited till Job had ſpoken.* What I have now touched, may be one reaſon of his waiting; But the ſpeciall reaſon of it follows in the text.

Because they were elder then he; and good reaſon that he ſhould waite upon his elders.

יְדֵי ſignificat
non tantum ſe-
nem ſed ſenia
conſectum, &
non tantum ſe-
nem aetate ſed
ſapientia.

The Hebrew is, *They were elder for dayes*; they were not only *old men for dayes, but elder for dayes then he*; The word, ſtrictly taken, imports a man more then old, even one that is worne with age. Further, it denotes a two-fold elderſhip; Firſt, an elderſhip in time, dayes or yeares. Secondly, an elderſhip in wiſdome, and underſtanding. *They are our elders indeed, who are wiſer then we*; elderſhip in time deſerves reſpect, but elderſhip in wiſdome commands it. And as ſuch are expreſt by this word in the Hebrew, ſo both the *Grecians* and *Romans* expreſſe their wiſe men by

a word of the same force ; *Senators* were elders, not alwayes in time (there was no Law much lesse necessary that every Senator should be an old man) but in understanding : every Senator ought to be a wise man, though not an old man. They who are to governe others wisely, had need be furnished with wisdom themselves. Gray haire alone cannot make a good Magistrate. We read the word applyed both to Church-Elders called (*Isa. 37. 2.) The Elders of the Priests*, and to State-Elders, called Elders of the people (*Exod. 17. 5.)* or of the Land (*Gen. 50. 7.) The Elders of the Land of Egypt went with them.* 'Tis said (*Psal. 105. 21, 22.) Pharaoh made Joseph Lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance, to binde his Princes at his pleasure, & teach his Senators wisdom.* Young Joseph made Pharaohs wise men wiser, and gave counsel to his counsellors. Here *Elihu* calls *Jobs* friends *Elders*, and we may take him either speaking strictly, that they were his Elders in time, or speaking modestly, that they were his Elders in wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, and therefore he was not hasty to speake, but gave them their scope, waiting till *Job* had spoken, *Because they were elder then he.*

Hence note, First in General.

Young men should shew respect and waite upon their Elders.

The Apostle would not have *Timothy* slighted, though young, (*1 Tim. 4. 12.) Let no man despise thy youth* ; He chargeth the people not to despise *Timothy* because young ; and he chargeth *Timothy* to carry it so, that none might have the shew of a cause to despise him though young ; *Let no man despise thy youth* ; let not those that seeke occasion finde it. Now, as young men, especially young Ministers should be so holy and grave in their conversation, as not to draw disrespect or contempt upon themselves, and as no man ought to despise the young meerly because they are young ; so all men ought to honour old age. The old Law was expresse for it (*Levit. 19. 32.) Thou shalt rise up before the hoary head, and honour the face of the old man, and feare thy God, I am the Lord.* See, how these two are joyned together, *Thou shalt honour the face of the old man, and feare thy God* ; As if he had said, honour old men in the feare of God, or shew feare to God in the reverence and honour which thou givest to old men, who having lived a long time or many dayes in the world,

world, bear at least a shadow of the eternity of God who is *The anciant of dayes*, who lives and abides for ever. There is a two-fold stampe of God upon old men, more then upon other men. First their very age hath a stamp of God upon it, for though all ages put together, are not a moment to eternity, yet, as to our computation and reckoning, old age beares the fairest image of eternity: Secondly, old men bear a resemblance of God in their wisdom, ('tis to be supposed that the oldest are wisest, as *Elihu* speaks v. 7.) So then old men are to be revered not only for their precedence in time, but for their experience, wisdom, knowledge and prudence, all which represent them more like to God then younger men.

*Seris venit u-
sus ab annis.*

*Mira in hoc e-
lucet antiquo-
rum in publicis
conversationi-
bus gravitas et
stupendum in-
violabiliter ser-
vati in dicendo
ac respondendo
ordinis exem-
plum. Bold.*

*Majores natu
loquantur junie-
res audiant; se-
nes doceant, a-
dolescentes dis-
cant; Pulcher-
rima disciplina
sententia. Druf.*

Secondly, Look to the speciall way wherein *Elihu* shewed reverence to his Elders, even by his long silence; he did not rudely nor rashly breake into discourse, but waited till they had done. This modesty of *Elihu* is both commendable and imitable; who would say nothing as long as *Job* or any of his friends had any thing to say, because they were elder then he. As the light of nature teacheth reverence to the aged in all cases, so more particularly, in this. There shines (as to this poynt an admirable comelinesse in the disputes of the Ancients, and a most eminent example of order inviolably kept both in proposing and answering. Their rule or maxime was, *Let the Seniors speake, let the Juniors hear. Let Old men teach, let young men learne.* It is the note of a learned Commentator upon this place from what himselfe had observed. Living (saith he) once at *Paris* in *France*, where, in a Monastery, *three Indians* were brought up and instructed in the Christian Religion, I could not but admire to behold how studiously, and strictly they kept to the Lawes of speaking, the younger not offering a word till the Elder had done; The practice of these *Indians* brought with them out of Heathenisme may reprove the imprudence of many, yea the impudence of some young men among us, who will be first in talk, when their betters and elders are in place; The Prophet threatned this as a great judgment. (*Isa. 3. 5.*) *The Child shall behave himself proudly against the Ancient.* The child is not to be taken here strictly, but for any inferior in age, though possibly himself be arrived to the state of manhood. As if the Prophet had said, there shall be a generall confusion among all degrees of men, without respect had to age or place

place, every stripling will take the boldness to talk and act unseemly before his betters. Obedience and silence, bowing the body, and holding the peace, are respects which ought to be paid to our Superiours whether in time or authority.

But as young men should not be forward to speak in the pretence of their elders, so they should not be afraid to speak when there is cause for it, especially when their elders forbear or refuse to speak any more. Thus *Elihu* who had long kept his mouth (as *David* in another case did *Psalm*: 39. 1.) *with a bridle, and was dumb with silence, yet at last his heart was hot within him, and while he was musing, the fire burned, and (as it followeth) he spake with his tongue.*

Vers. 5. *When Elihu saw that there was no answer in the mouth of these three men, then his wrath was kindled.*

When Elihu saw it, that is, when he was as much assured of it (by their gesture and carriage) as if it had been visible, that those three men had no more to say, or would say no more (for the words may be referred indifferently to their will or power, when, I say, he saw they had no more to say) Either, first, to convince *Job* of error, or secondly, to defend the truth of God, which they had undertaken (when he saw this) *his wrath was kindled*, at that instant time, and for that very reason, *his wrath was kindled*. Some conceive (as was shewed before) that this anger proceeded from the passionateness of his spirit, and so tax him with it as his fault; but I rather consent with those who say it proceeded from his zeal for God, and so it was his vertue and his praise.

I have met with these words two or three times already since I entred upon this Chapter, and therefore I shall not stay upon them here; And as this anger of *Elihu* was spoken of before, so the same reason which was given before of his anger is repeated and reported hear again; *Then his wrath was kindled because they had no answer in their mouths*, that is, because they had no more to say against *Job* whom they had condemned; and because they had no more to say for God whose cause in afflicting *Job* they had defended; I shall only adde a few brief Notes upon this Verse, and so passe on.

First, *Some men answer till they have no more to answer.*

'Tis very possible for a good and a wise man to be at the bottom of his reason, in some points, or to be brought to such a wall, that he can go no further; *David saith, I have seen an end of all perfection,* which as it is true of all outward commodities and conveniences, which men enjoy, so both of their corporal and intellectual abilities, or of what they can either do or say. The best of men may see the end of their best perfections in all things, but Grace, and the hope of Glory. Their stock and treasure may be quite spent, their spring exhausted, and they gone to their utmost line and length. There's no more answer in their mouth, nor work in their hand.

Secondly note;

It may put a wise man into passion to see how ill some wise men use their reason, or that they can make no further use of it.

Then was the anger of *Elihu* kindled when he saw, they could answer no more, or that *there was no answer in the mouth of these three men.*

Thirdly, As the anger of *Elihu* is often spoken of, so still we find some what or other is assigned as a ground of it;

Whence note;

We should see good reason for our anger before we are angry, whether in our own cause, or in the cause of God.

There is nothing can excuse anger but the cause of it. Reason is a good plea for passion; And he that hath a true reason for his anger, will probably manage his anger with reason, yea, and mingle it with grace; And so he proves not only a rational, but a gracious anger.

Fourthly note;

Provoked patience breaks out into greater passion.

In the former Verse, we find *Job* waiting, he waited long and patiently; but being disappointed of what he waited for, his wrath broke out; *His anger was kindled*; As when God waits long and is disappointed, his anger is increased in the manifestation of it (Rom. 2. 4, 5. ver:) *Despiseest thou the riches of his goodness*

nesse and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leads thee to repentance? but after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up wrath, &c. As if he had said, the more patience God spends upon thee, the more wrath is treasured up for thee, and that wrath will break out the more fiercely and violently to consume thee, the longer it hath been treasured up. Now I say, as the wrath of God is the more declared against man, by how much his patience is the more abused; So the abused patience of man will turn to greater anger, and he groweth the more passionate by how much he hath been the more and the oftner deceived. Thus *Elihu* is still described acting angrily, yet in the very next verse we shall find him speaking soberly, plainly and to purpose.

Vers. 6. And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said.

When *Elihu* saw these three men gravel'd, and that after all the outcry they made against *Job*, they were forced to leave him as they found him, unconvinced of those crimes, of that hypocrisie, which they had layd to his charge, he hereupon saw himselfe engaged to undertake the matter and offer his opinion.

Concerning *Elihu*, his name, his fathers name, *Barachel*, his tribe or stock, a *Buzite*, I have spoken at the 2^d verse, and shall not adde any thing of it here; only take notice, That here *Elihu* begins his own preface; The former part of the Chapter contained the report of the divine historian concerning *Elihu*; but these are the words of *Elihu* himselfe; here he begins like an O-rator to gaine favour with and attention of his hearers, or to prepare the minds of his hearers to receive what he had to say; And upon this subject or piece of Rhetoricke (making Prefaces) he spends the whole that remaines of this Chapter. *And Elihu, &c. answered and said,*

I am young, and ye are very old (that is it which he said) therefore I was afraid and durst not shew mine opinion.

As if he had said, *I am conscious to my selfe of the weaknesse which accompanieth youth; I very well know my own incompetency for such a worke; I am young.*

G

The

Parvus secundum dies. Heb: The Hebrew is, *I am few of dayes*, or, *little according to dayes*; if you should reckon or measure me by dayes, I am very little; And is not every man so? If you measure any man by dayes, is not he very little? *Thou hast made my age a span long* (saith David, Psal. 39. 7.) that's quickly measured. *Job* spake thus (Chap. 14. 1.) *Man that is borne of a woman, is of few dayes, and full of trouble*; He saith not, this or that man, but *man*, take old men, the Elders, take all men, the oldest men are but few of dayes in themselves considered; and comparatively to the age or rather the eternity of God, their utmost age is but as a drop to the ocean. Thus all men, even ancient men are few of dayes, which is here the description of a young man, *I am young* (saith *Elihu*) or *few of dayes*; but compare one man with another, so some have few dayes, and others many dayes; young men have few dayes, and old men have many dayes, compared with one another.

*I am young,
and ye are very old.*

U'U' decrepitus.

The word notes decrepid old age, the very dregs of age, the utmost line of life; old age like a heavy burden bowes the back, and cripples the limbes of the strongest and stoutest sons of *Adam*.

Hominis etates in septem partitur, Hippocrates

1 *Parvulus ad annum 7 mun.*

2 *Puer ad An: 14.*

3 *Adolescens ad An: 21.*

4 *Juvenis ad An: 28.*

5 *Vir ad An: 50.*

6 *Senex ad An: 56.*

7 *Decrepitus post quamdiu vivit.*

See more of this word (Chap. 15. 10.) There are severall divisions of the life of man, some cast it into foure parts, surable to the foure seasons of the yeare; some into five, alluding to the Acts of an Interlude or play; others into seven, in allusion to the Planets; now what ever division you make of the life of man, this decrepid old age is the last.

*I am young, and ye are very old,
wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew mine opinion.*

What effect that sence which *Elihu* had of his youth or fewnesse of dayes produced in him, is set forth in these words; 'twas feare, *I* (saith he) *was afraid*, &c. There is, (as to this poyn) a twofold feare: First, a cowardly feare; Secondly, a modest feare; when *Elihu* saith, *he was afraid*, he doth not meane the feare of a coward; but of a modest man: it is not cowardize to be afraid of doing many things, to feare to doe those things which are unlawfull, or which are uncomely, is no part of cowardize. This latter feare surprized or rather composed *Elihu*; he

he was a man bold spirited enough, but modesty made him afraid to shew his opinion. There is a great elegancy in those words; *I durst not shew mine opinion*; They imply, he hid his speech, as Serpents hide themselves when men approach. (*Micah 7. 17.*) Serpents which are a terrour to men, and make them afraid, are also afraid of men, their appearance causeth them to run and hide their heads. The Rabbins take much paines in their Criticisimes about this word to expresse a vertuous modesty. As it is a duty to be (as Christ exhorts his Disciples to be) especially in times of persecution (*Math. 10. 10.*) *wise as Serpents*, so it is a vertue to be fearefull as Serpents, even to feare as much to be heard by some men, as Serpents feare to be seene by any man. Thus *Elihu* held downe his head, he was afraid and durst not shew his opinion suddenly, nor declare his judgement in the case, for the reverence he bare to those graver and elder heads.

Est serpens & denotat timorem serpentum latebras quærentium & videri metuentium. Aben-Ezra.

Reptilium more dimisi me; unde vulgatus reddit, Demisso capite veritus sum. Drusi:

Note hence.

First, *Young men are apt to run into mistakes, their heat usually exceeds their light.*

Youth drives furiously, and commonly carrieth presumption with it, or is it selfe hurried by presumption. Though God hath given a young man a good understanding, quick parts, and a ready tongue, yet he wants much, because he hath not seene much, and so is very liable to miscarriage. He cannot look through, nor see to the end of things; for as it is the great and sole priviledge of God to cast an eye quire through all intermediate, both actions and revolutions, and to see the end from the beginning: so it is more peculiar to those that are aged and long experienced, to see much of the end of things in their beginnings, or to see what is like to be as well as what is. 'Tis the part of a wise man to consider what may come, and whether things tend; there is much weakness and deficiency in young men as to this. As most young men want senses exercised (as the Apostle speakes of all un-improved Christians of what age soever (*Heb. 5. 19.*) as I say, most young men want senses exercised) to discern what is good or evill; so they want senses exercised to discern what good or evill is like to be, they rarely see effects in their causes, or events in their prognosticks. Therefore *Elihu* might well say, *I am young, therefore I durst not venture to shew mine opinion.*

Paul giveth *Timothy* somewhat a strange warning (2 *Tim.* 2. 22.) *Flee youthfull lusts.* *Timothy* was young, but was he noted for indulgence to any youthfull lusts? what lusts doth he meane? surely not drunkenness, nor uncleanness, nor any loose behaviour; for though the most sober and temperate young men, have in them the seed of all these, yea of every lust, yet *Timothy* at that time was a pattern, a mirrour, not only of sobriety, but of holiness; and *Paul* was even forced to bid him take more liberty in the use of the creature, then he used to allow himselfe; *Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach sake, and for thy often infirmities.* Surely *Timothy* was a man that fled such youthfull lusts fast and far enough when he drank nothing but water, and must be bid to drink a little wine (1 *Tim.* 5. 23.) What lusts then were they which *Timothy* was exhorted to flee? the words following (ver. 23, 24, 25.) seeme to cleare it; that because he was young, he should take heed of rushing into unnecessary Questions and disputes, which young men are apt to doe in the heat of their spirits; nor are there any lusts of the lower or sensuall appetite, to which the heart of man is more intemperately and vainely carried out, then to those of the understanding; and therefore the Apostle counsels *Timothy* to avoid unprofitable Questions, knowing that these gender strife; (Those Questions cannot promote faith in or holiness towards God, which only stirre up and foment strife among men) and the servants of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all, and patient. These vertues, and graces, are opposed chiefly to the youthfull lusts which *Paul* exhorts *Timothy* to take heed of; As if he had said, *Be not too hot-headed and hasty (as young men are very apt to be) in pursuing of controversies and entangling thy selfe in the thickets of Opinionists.* *Elihu* was of an excellent temper, who, because young, was afraid and durst not shew his opinion.

Secondly, Note.

It is good to feare, and suspect our own judgements, or, to feare that we may erre; they seldome doe or speak amisse who feare they may.

An over-confidence of being in the right, hath settled many in a wrong way; to be under a sense of our readinesse to fall, preserves us from falling, (*Hosea* 13. 1.) *When Ephraim spake*
trem-

trembling, then, he exalted himselfe; There are severall senses given of that place, but according to our translation, the meaning is carried thus; When *Ephraim* was in an humble frame, and jealous of himselfe, not confident, nor over-bold (as some are who presume to carry all before them) when he spake trembling, or did even tremble to speake, then he did that which tended to his own advancement and exaltation. This gracious trembling doth at once settle us the faster, and raise us the higher in the wayes and things of God. *It is a high point of wisdom to have low apprehensions of our selves*; though that be true, *You shall be esteemed of others, as you esteem your selves*; If a man under-value himselfe others will; yet, 'tis best erring on that hand; Let the price be much too low, rather then any thing too high, when you are occasioned to put a value upon or rate your selves.

*Tanti enim alii
quanti tibi fue-
rit.*

Againe, Consider what an excellent speaker *Elihu* was when he came to it, as will appeare hereafter, yet see how he stood trembling, he durst not speake, nor offer his opinion.

Hence note.

Usually they who have most ability to speak, are most backward to speak, or sparing of speech.

They are not easily brought to it, who have it in them; The belly of *Elihu* was as full with matter, as an Egge with meate or a bottle with wine; yet how slow was he in opening himselfe? They who are and have least are most desirous, if not ambitious, to appeare most, and would make up in seeming what they are not in being. As *Elihu* in this verse hath shewed himselfe afraid to say any thing, so he shewes us in the next, who, he hoped, would have said all, and altogether have saved him a labour.

Vers. 7. *I said, dayes should speak, and multitude of yeares should teach wisdom;*

Or, as the text may be rendred, *let dayes speak*; dayes shall not be hindered by me from speaking, let dayes speak their fill. But what meaneth he, when he saith, *let dayes speak*? how can dayes speak; 'tis an elegancy in Rhetorick, when that which belongs to a person, is ascribed to a thing, as here speech to time, *let dayes speak*; that is, let those who number many dayes, who have lived

*Loquantur
dies sunt enim
verba permit-
tentu q.d. sinam
loqui illos, non
præcipiam eis
loquendi locum.*
and *Pisc.*

*Johannes de
Temporibus.*

and seene many dayes, let them speak; they who have lived most dayes on earth, are yet indeed (as *Bildad* told *Job*, Chap. 8. 9.) *but of yesterday*, and so have lived, as it were, but a day; yet, according to common account, some men are so very old, that you may call them *dayes*, and to them we may well say, *let Dayes speak*. We read of one who was called *John of Times*, because he had lived (if the Records spake true) three hundred yeares and more. An old man is a man of dayes; and thus *Elihu* might say, let dayes, that is, *old men speak*.

But Children can speak, why then doth he say, *dayes should speak*? I answer; There is a twofold speaking; First, naturall, thus Children, as soone as they are out of their swadling-bands, learne to speak; such speaking is but a naturall act; Secondly, There is a speaking which is an artificiall or studied act; thus Orators and men of eloquence speake; such speaking *Elihu* intended when he sayd, *dayes should speak*; *He looked they should speak to purpose*, speak by rule, even the quintessence of reason; he presumed they would have brought forth somewhat worthy of their yeares, and that he should have received such instruction from them, as they had learned from old age it selfe; *I sayd dayes should speak*. Children can speak words, but old men should speak things, every word should have its weight; their tongues should drop as the honey-combe, and be a tree of life to feed and refresh many. It is most truly said of the word of God in Scripture, *Every tittle of it hath a mountaine of sence*, a mighty weight of truth in it; And surely the words of old men should be weighty and convincing; They should speak truth with such evidence both of testimony and reason as may put to silence all those who speak against or besides either truth or reason. As, *day unto day* (saith *David*, Psal. 19. 2.) *uttereth speech*, that is, every day speaks somewhat; so *men of dayes* should speak much both for instruction and conviction. *I said dayes should speak*.

Hence note.

That's not to be esteemed as done at all, which is not well done, or not done to purpose.

An old man doth not speak unlesse he speaks wisely, edifyingly, and to the poynt. The aged speak like children, when they speak foolishly, or unfruitfully. He only is a good speaker, who
speaks

speaks that which may doe others good, or make them better. We say proverbially and truly both of saying and doing, *As good never a whit, as never the better.*

*I said dayes should speak,
and multitude of yeares should teach wisdom.*

Elihu reckons the age of aged men, by *multitude of yeares*; this he doth only to highten the matter; what wisdom might he not expect from a multitude of yeares? that is, from such as had lived a multitude of yeares. Certainly thought *Elihu*, they will

Teach wisdom.

There is a twofold wisdom; First, that which is meere rational; Secondly, that which is spirituall; or there is first, a common; secondly, an holy wisdom; *Elihu* expected wisdom of both sorts, but chiefly of the latter, from multitude of yeares. He expected they would teach the wisdom which the Spirit of God had taught them; that wisdom which consists in the true knowledge of God and of our selves, that wisdom which is from above, that which man hath not from himselfe, nor is taught him by dayes or yeares, by use or experience only. And it was very probable, that they who from their youth had been instructed in the things of God, being growne old, should also be growne further in this wisdom, and riper in this sort of knowledge. And therefore *Elihu* spake according to the rule of right reason, when he judged that those three aged men had attained to a very high degree of divine light. Such is the goodnesse of God to his people, that usually they grow in grace and knowledge as they grow in yeares; For though God is Debtor to no man (but Creditor to all men) and though old age in it selfe considered, deserves nothing of God, yea is not only undeserving, but (because sin multiplies as our dayes doe) ill deserving, yet as Christ saith, *To him that hath*, (that is, who useth and improveth what he hath) *more shall be given*; And therefore though true wisdom be a free gift, and is infused and wrought by the Spirit of God, yet we may in probability, and ought according to charity, judge, that they who have most dayes, have also most wisdom. Though wisdom be not entayled upon old age, yet there we are most likely to finde it. *I said multitude of yeares should teach wisdom.*

Sapientiam intelligit, quæ in vera dei cognitione sita est; cujus author sit spiritus dei, non hominis animus, non anni, non usus, non experientia. Merit:

Hence:

Hence observe first.

We may well expect they should be very wise, and knowing, who have had much means, and many opportunities of obtaining knowledge and wisdom.

Causis sufficientibus positis in actu necessario sequitur effectus.

And therefore we have reason to expect much wisdom from those who have had a multitude of yeares past over their heads ;

It is a common rule in Logick, *When sufficient causes are put in act, the effect must needs follow* ; And to where probable causes are in

act, probably the effect will follow. Old men having been well brought up in youth, and having had faire opportunities to attaine knowledge and wisdom, are rightly presumed and judged well stor'd and stockt with both. Where shall we finde wisdom, if not among the Ancients ? where, if not among a multitude or throng of yeares and dayes ? where else should we look for it ? shall we goe and enquire among the greene heads and young beginners for it ? shall we goe to novices and children for it ? We may say, surely they who have been long taught, have learned much, surely they who have heard many soule-searching Sermons, and continued from day to day under the droppings of divine truths, are full of fruit and very fruitfull ; whether shall we goe for fruit else, if not to these ? shall we goe to those that live as upon the mountaines of *Gilboa*, where *David* prayed no raine might fall ? shall we goe for Gospel-fruit to the wild naked untaught *Indians* and *Barbarians*, or to the rightly instituted and plentifully instructed Churches of Christ ? may we not more then say, conclude, surely these are wise, and full of spirituall understanding ? The Roman Orator *Cicero* took it for granted that his

*Quamquam te Marce Fili An-
num jam audi-
entem Cratip-
pum idq; Athe-
nis abundare
oportet præcep-
tis institutisq;
philosophia,
&c. Cic. de
Offi. lib. 1.*

son *Marcus* was well grounded in and plentifully furnished with the principles of Philosophy, because he had been at *Athens* a whole yeare, and there heard *Cratippus* a famous Philosopher read many excellent Lectures about things natural and morall.

And may we not say to many thousands of Gospel-hearers and professors, what ? you that have heard such, and such able Ministers, you that have had the word so long preached, and that at *London* (more famous for Gospel knowledge, then *Athens* for philosophy) surely you are filled with all knowledge in the mystery of Christ, and with all goodnesse in the practice of godlinesse. And doubtlesse, the Lord will argue it with those that have

had

had time and opportunities, as a rich price in their hand to get wisdom, as *Elihu* did with his friends being aged men. Who can imagine, but that they are full of wisdom, that they abound in knowledge and spirituall understanding, who abounding in dayes and yeares, have abounded also in meanes of knowledge.

Note Secondly.

As old men should abound in knowledge, so they should approve themselves ready to teach the ignorant.

I said dayes should speak, and multitude of yeares should teach wisdom. 'Tis a duty incumbent upon them who have learned much, to teach much. To convey wisdom and knowledge to others is most proper to such, as well as most ornamental, and honourable. To be knowing our selves is a great mercy, and to helpe others to the knowledge of what we know is a great duty; we loose one speciall end of knowing, if we know only for our selves. To communicate and diffuse our knowledge to others is the noblest way of using it, and the best way of improving it, and that in a double respect; First, it is the best way of improving it, as to encrease; Secondly, it is the best way of improving it, as to reward. The more we give out our knowledge, the more we shall have of it, and the more we shall have for it both from God and men. The Apostle saith of a Gospel Minister (1 Tim. 3.2.) *He must be apt to teach*, not only able, but apt, that is, ready and willing to teach; now what the Apostle speaks there of an Elder by office, is true of those that are elders in time, they also should be apt to teach; not only able, but ready and willing to teach in and according to their sphere and power. *I said dayes should speak*, &c.

Thirdly, Note.

'Tis a reproach to old age, not to be knowing and wise, not to be able and apt to teach wisdom.

That old age is venerable, not which hath white hayre, but which whiteneth with vertuous and worthy actions; *Elihu* speaks here, not only narratively but reprovngly, he reflects upon the ancient, whose abilities come not up to or doe not equall their yeares. The aged may well blush and be ashamed to be found ignorant of, or unskilfull in any thing that they ought to know.

Seneſtus illa venerabilis eſt, non quæ canis ſed meritis albeſcit. Ambro: lib: 7. Epist. 70.

The Apostle shames the *Hebrewes* with this, and tells them they were dull of hearing (*Heb. 5. 11, 12.*) because when for the time they ought to be teachers, they had need that one should teach them againe which be the first principles of the oracles of God, and were become such as had need of milke and not of strong meate ; As if he had said, When for the time, dayes, and yeares, which have gone over your heads, (the reproofe lyes there) you should be able to teach others, what a shame is it that you your selves should not be capable of those higher teachings, which he calls, *strong meate*, but must be dealt with about the very principles of Religion, and be fed like Children with milke and spoones ? How is it that you who should have had *sences exercised to discerne both good & evil*, should be so little able to distinguish them, either in their kinds or degrees. These were spiritually Children, while naturally old men ; They had not learned of their teachers, when the Apostle had reason to hope they had been able to teach learners, yea were learned teachers. Some are exceeding old, & exceeding ignorant, they have multitude of dayes upon them, yet if asked, they are not able to hold forth the least Number of divine truths, possibly not one in a right understanding ; *As gray haire is a crowne of glory when found in the way of righteousness*, so gray haire is crowns of glory, when found in a way of wisdom, knowledge, and understanding, otherwise to be old and dooth, old and sottish, how dishonorable is it ! yea, they that are old and ignorant, shall at last finde their old age, a strong aggravation, as of all their sins, so especially of their ignorance.

J O B. Chap. 32. Vers. 8, 9.

But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding. Great men are not alwayes wise, neither doe the aged understand judgement.

Elibu, as was shewed in the former words, having in vaine waited for the wisdom of the Ancient, proceeds in this Context to give the reason why the Ancient are not alwayes wise.

Vers. 8. *There is a spirit in man; and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.*

There's the reason of it; we render the first word of this eight verse by the Adversative particle (*But*) *there is a spirit in man*; it is usually rendered by the Affirmative particle, *verily*, truly, or indeed. Mr Broughton saith, *Certes a spirit is in sad man.*

There is some difference in opinion about this *spirit* affirmed to be in man. Divers expound *Elibu* intending the Spirit of God; *there is a spirit*; that is, the divine Spirit, the holy Spirit of God, or God the Spirit is in man. One of the Greek translations puts *ὅτι τὸ πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἐστὶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις*. Symmach. *Surely the Spirit of God is in man*; and the Chaldee paraphrase gives it in a like expression; *Surely there is a prophetick spirit in the son of man, or, in the sons of men.* Some are induced to this interpretation, because it would be (say they) but a cold argument to commend what he had to say for the rectifying *Job*, by telling him that man hath a reasonable soule, which is common to all men. Yet I rather conceive that in this first part of the verse, the spirit spoken of is the naturall spirit of man, which in the latter part of the verse he affirms is instructed, by the inspiration of the Almighty, with supernatural light for speciall services. The word is often used in Scripture to note the reasonable soule, or those powers of the soule which are the vessels of reason, or in which naturall reason hath its seate and exercise. There is a power of reasoning in man, or a spirit which is able to discourse of all things; there was such a naturall power

knowledge, and a man of understanding will attaine unto all Counsell; Every man hath an understanding, but every man is not a man of understanding; every man is not a man of understanding in naturall and civill things, much leſſe in things divine and ſpirituall. As ſome men have ſo much will, or rather wiſfulneſſe, that they are nothing but will; and ſome have ſo much paſſion, that they are nothing but paſſion; ſo others have ſuch riches and treasures of understanding, as if they were nothing but understanding. Now, it is the ſpeciall inſpiration of the Almighty which giveth ſuch an understanding; that is, an enlarged and an enriched understanding. We ſay, *the inſpiration of the Almighty*

giveth understanding.

The Hebrew is but one word, which we may expreſſe as ſome doe, *It Intellectiſeth*. So then, the ſcope and meaning of this verſe is plainly this; That howſoever every man, the meanest of men, hath a reaſonable ſoule, yet the furniture of the understanding, or mans fulneſſe of wiſdome and knowledge is by gift or inſpiration of the Almighty; and therefore ſome read the verſe thus; *Surely there is a ſpirit in man, but the inſpiration of the Almighty maketh them to underſtand*. Thus *Elihu* would gaine credit and authority to what he had to deliver, as being by the teachings and dictates of the Spirit of God. The Seventy comply fully with this rendering; *There is a ſpirit in men, but the inſpiration of the Almighty teacheth*; As if *Elihu* had ſaid, *Though man be endued with naturall knowledge and reaſon, which can doe ſomewhat, yet untill light ſhines from above, till the ſpirit of God comes in and enlargeth the naturall ſpirit, it cannot ſee farre, nor doe any great matter*. Or take the ſence of the whole verſe thus, in connection with what went before; *Though old age hath odds of youth, yet one man as well as another hath a ſpirit of reaſon and judgement in him, whereby through ſupply of ſpeciall inſpiration from God (who can doe all things) he may be able to know that which want of yeares denieth him*. From the words thus opened,

תבין
Intellectificat
eor. Brent.

Est ſpiritus in
hominibus, ſpi-
ratio autem
omnipotentis
docet. Sept.

Obſerve, Firſt.

Wiſdome or underſtanding is the gift of the Spirit of God.

We have a like aſſertion by way of queſtion in the 38th Chapter of this booke (ver. 36.) *Who hath put wiſdome into the inward*

ward parts, or who hath given understanding to the heart? who hath? hath man put wisdome into himselfe? or hath he made his own heart to understand? the Question denies, no, man hath not done it. Wisdome is an Influence or an Inspiration from the Almighty; knowledge to order common things is of the Lord (*Isa. 28. 26, 29.*) *His God doth instruct him* (the husband-man he meanes) *to discretion* (in ordering the ground) *and doth teach him*; how much more in spirituall things and the mysteries of the kingdome of heaven. (*Prov. 16. 1.*) *The preparation of the heart in man, and the Answer of the tongue* (that is, The fitting of the heart for any right answer of the tongue) *is from the Lord*; both the generall preparation of the heart for service or use, and the speciall preparation of it to this or that service & use is of the Lord, & so is the Answer of the tongue for the discharge of it. (*Eccles. 2. 26.*) *God giveth to a man that is good in his sight, wisdome and knowledge and joy*; As God giveth man the knowledge of things, so wisdome to know how to order and manage the things that he knoweth; Some have more knowledge then they know how to manage, their knowledge masters them, they are not masters of their knowledge; they have more knowledge then wisdome. Now God gives to him that is good in his sight (that is, to the man whom he chooseth and is pleased with) knowledge and wisdome; and then he gives him joy, that is, Comfort in the exercise of that knowledge wherewith he is endued; this is a notable and a noble gift of God. We read (*Isa. 11. 2.*) *The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdome and understanding*; It is a prophesie of Christ, who being made in all things like to man, had a naturall spirit, or a reasonable faculty, and he had that furnished by the spirit without measure; the spirit of the Lord rested upon him, *the spirit of wisdome and understanding, the spirit of Counsell and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the feare of the Lord*; even Christ as man received an unction or inspiration from the Almighty for the fullfilling of his Mediatoriall office; much more doe meere men for the fullfilling of any office they are called unto. (*2 Cor. 3. 5.*) *We are not sufficient of our selves so much as to thinke a good thought*; Our sufficiency is by the Inspiration of the Almighty. (*James 1. 17.*) *Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above*; It is not a vapour that riseth out of the earth, but an Influence which distills

itills and drops downe from heaven, it is from above ; that is, from God, who though he be every where filling both heaven and earth with his essentiall presence , yet (according to Scripture language) his most glorious and manifestative presence is *above* ; and therefore to say, every good gift is from above, is all one as to say, it is from God. *Daniel* and those other three Noble youths of the Jewish race exceeded all the wise men of *Chaldea* in rare abilities, and the Scripture tells us, whence it was, that they did so. (*Dan. 1. 17.*) *As for these foure Children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom ;* and the assertion is layd downe in General (*Dan. 2. 21.*) *He* (that is ; God) *changeth times and seasons , he removeth Kings and setteth up Kings, he giveth wisdom to the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding ;* All these Scriptures speak with one Consent the language of this Text, *It is the Inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding.* And if we compare *1 Sam. 10. 1.* with the 6th 9th 11th and 12th verses of the same Chapter, we have a most remarkable passage to this purpose. Where *Saul* having received the unction from *Samuel*, both as an assurance of and a preparation for the exercise of his kingly office over *Israel* ; *Samuel* tells him (*ver. 6.*) *The Spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophecy with them* (that is, with the company of Prophets spoken of in the former verse) *and shalt be turned into another man.* And the holy text adds (*ver. 9.*) *God gave* (or as we put in the margin *turned*) *him another heart.* There is a twofold turning or changing of the heart, or of a man into another man. First, by gifts of Illumination ; Secondly, by the grace of Sanctification ; the great change of the heart is that change, of Conversion, by the grace of Sanctification ; *Saul* was not turned into another man, nor had he another heart, as changed by Grace (for he shewed still his old heart in his new kingly state) but he had *another heart*, or he was another man as changed by gifts ; the spirit of the Almighty gave him understanding for the Government which he was called to ; for whereas before he had only a private spirit, taken up about cattel and the affaires of husbandry, then God gave him a spirit of prudence and valour, a spirit of wisdom and magnanimity, a Noble and an Heroicall Spirit, befitting the Governour of so great and populous a kingdom, both in peace and warre. Every Calling is a mystery, much more.

*Tu regere im-
perio populos
Romane me-
mento; Haec tibi
sunt artes---*

more the Calling of Kings and Supream Magistrates. It was said to Imperiall *Rome*; *Doe thou remember to Rule Nations and Kingdomes, let these be thy arts*; This Art the Spirit of the Lord gave *Saul*, even knowledge and skill to rule and governe; yea he had a gift of Illumination, not only for government; but for prophesie, he was found amongst the Prophets; and when (v. 11th) they asked (wondering) *Is Saul also amongst the Prophets*; As if they had said, How strange and unheard of a thing is this, that *Saul* should be furnished with the gift of prophecy, and joyne himselfe with the Prophets? They who before were acquainted with his person and manner of education, were even amazed at the sight; And while they were surprized with this amazement, *one of the same place* (as it seemes wiser then the rest) *Answered and said, but who is their father?* (ver. 12.) That's the speciall word, for which I alledge this text. What? *Saul* among the Prophets! is it not strange that he should be Inspired! *Then one Answered and said, who is their father?* As if he had said, Doe not any longer stand wondering at this thing, but consider who is the father of *Saul* as a Prophet, as also the father of all these Prophets. *Saul* was the son of *Kish* as to naturall descent, but he had another father as he was a Prophet, and so all these Prophets, had (besides their Fathers as men) one and the same father as Prophets. Therefore wonder not that ye heare *Saul* prophecyng, for all these whom ye heare and see prophecyng, have not these gifts by birth from men, nor by industry from themselves, but from God who is a free agent, and inspireth whom he pleaseth. The same God who, by inspiration, hath freely bestowed those gifts upon the other Prophets, hath also inspired *Saul* with a gift of prophecy. The Spirit of God is his father (in that capacity) as well as the father of these other Prophets. And hence that Scripture runs in the plurall number, *who is their father?* Unless God give power from above, the understanding is darke, the memory unfaithfull, the tongue stammering; It is light from on high that teacheth the skill of prophecy. *Solomon* had the greatest measure of understanding of any meere man since the fall of man, and of him it is said, (1 Kings 4. 29.) *God gave Solomon wisdome and understanding exceeding much, and largenesse of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore.* *Solomons* heart had been as narrow as another mans, if the Inspiration of the Almighty had not widened

widened it. When *Moses* was so sinfully modest, as to excuse his Embassie to *Pharaoh*, supposing himselfe not fitted for such an undertaking (*Exod: 4. 10, 11.*) *O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant, but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.* God presently put the question to him, *Who hath made mans mouth?* &c. As if he had said, Cannot he give words into thy mouth, who gave thee a mouth? cannot he act thy organs of speech who made them? *Now therefore goe and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.* The Inspiration of the Almighty shall give thee understanding. Heathen Poets have boasted of their raptures and inspirations. The people of God have a promise of the Spirit to lead them into all truth, and to helpe them in main-
taining those truths.

Est deum in nobis sunt et commercia cali, sedibus aethereis spiritus ipse venit. Ovid.

From this generall, that the furniture of the understanding is the gift of God, or by Inspiration of the Almighty, take these hints by way of Corollary.

First, If a right understanding flow from the inspiration of the Almighty, then pray for an understanding, pray for the Spirit; *Ye have not because ye aske not,* saith the Apostle (*James 4. 2.*) God gives wisdom, but he gives it to them that aske it (*Jam: 1. 5.*) *If any man want wisdom, let him aske it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraiderh not.* God upbraiderh us not, either with our want of wisdom, or with the abundance of wisdom that he is pleased to supply us with, and give out to us. When *Solomon* was put to his choice what to aske, he said, *Give thy servant an understanding heart.* God gave *Solomon* wisdom, but *Solomon* asked it first. All good things are shut up in promises, and the promises are opened to give out their good things, when we pray. (*Prov. 23. 5.*) *When thou cryest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding, then shalt thou understand the feare of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God.* To pray well is to studie well, because by prayer light comes in from on high to make studies successfull, and the worke to prosper in our hand. As the Almighty breatherh downe on us, so we must breath up to the Almighty. To expect and not to pray, is to tempt God, not to trust him.

Secondly, Doe not onely pray for wisdom, but use meanes, and be industrious for the obtaining of it; *The gift of God doth*

not take off the diligence of man. God doth not worke in us that we should sit still. (*Prov. 2. 4.*) *Then shalt thou know wisdom when thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure.* And where is this treasure to be had ? Surely in the mines of Scripture, and in all those Appoyntments wherein God hath promised to meeete his people, to shine upon them and give them the knowledge of his wayes in Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, Be thankfull for any gift of knowledge; for every beame and ray of light be thankfull; It is God who commands light to shine out of darknesse, and that God who at first commanded light to shine out of darknesse, dayly shineth into our hearts, *to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,* (*2 Cor. 4. 6.*)

Fourthly, If understanding be from Inspiration, then they who have received much understanding, must be caution'd against two evils; First, not to be proud, nor high minded; that our gifts come from on high, should make us very low in our owne eyes. *What hast thou that thou hast not received, and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?* These are the Apostles soule-humbling and pride-morrifying questions or expostulations rather (*1 Cor. 4. 7.*) You that have received the greatest gifts, whom the Inspiration of the Almighty hath made most wise and understanding, be ye most humble in your selves. Secondly, let me adde (which is another dangerous rock upon which great gifts are apt to dash and split you) take heed of despising those who have received lesse; our portions are divided and allotted to us by the hand of God. Divine wisdom gives us our portion of wisdom; He that hath most, hath no more then God hath given; and he that hath least, hath as much as God is pleased to give. They despise the wisdom and question the understanding of God in giving wisdom, who despise those to whom he gives lesse wisdom and understanding then he hath given to themselves.

Fifthly, To those who have received but little, I say also two things, by way of caution; First, doe not envie those who have received much; It is of God that they have more then you, is your eye evil because the eye of God is good? Secondly, be not discontented with your own lesser portion; doe not sit downe fullen; say not, we will doe nothing with what we have received, because

we have not as much as others : we know the doome passed on him who having but one talent hid it in a napkin. If we are discontent with a little portion, or with one talent, that little is too much, and that one too many for us ; nothing doth more dim the glory of God, nor more destroy and eat out our own comforts, then discontent ; the Devill, since his fall, is the most discontented spirit in the world, and he was not contented while he stood ; he thought he was not high enough, & that was his undoing. They who are discontent with the gift of God, loose what is given, and so fall into deeper discontent ; yea, as the Apostle speakes in another case (*1 Tim. 3. 6.*) *into the condemnation of the devill.*

Sixthly, Then, let us not be lifted up in our owne naturall wisdom and reason, he that *would be wise, must become a fool.* (*1 Cor. 3. 18.*) untill we see our owne wisdom folly, we cannot attaine the wisdom of God, or Godly wisdom.

Seventhly, This shews us the reason of the various kinds, and severall measures of gifts among the sons of men. Men differ not more in the measures and degrees of their outward estates, worldly riches, titles and honours, then they doe in the measures and degrees of their inward abilities, wisdom, knowledge, and understanding : men differ not more in the feature and figure of their faces, then in the furniture of their minds. One hath five talents, another two, a third but one. And as the various degrees of the same gift, so diversities of gifts are from the soveraigne pleasure of God. The Apostle is large and very distinct in this matter (*1 Cor. 12. 4, 8, 9, 11.*) *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit ; to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, to another prophecy, to another discerning of Spirits, to another divers kinds of tongues, &c. But all these worketh that one and the selfe-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* It is only the will of the Spirit, the will of God which makes this division and diversification of gifts among men. And as the Apostle sheweth here the rise or spring of all to be from God, so he had shewed that the reason and intendment of all this is the benefit of men. (*v. 7.*) *The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withall.* What ever your gift is God hath given it for profit and use. One hath skill in sciences, another in languages, one is more

*Res sine ver-
bis Lutherus,
verba sine re-
bus Erasmus,
res & verba
Philippus.*

acute, another more solid, one hath a stronger judgement, another a quicker phantasie and a more searching invention, One is best at an argument to convince the understanding, another at a motive to quicken the affections; one can confute an error and state a Controversie well, and another can best discover sin, and convince the Conscience; one hath weight of matter, but is slow of speech, another hath a fluent tongue, but is lesse materiall; a third is both; but all to profit withall. Such a Character was given of those three Eminent men in the beginning of the reformation, *Luther, Erasmus; and Melancthon*; *Luther* had matter and not words, he did not affect any exactnesse of stile or speech; *Erasmus* had words at will, but lesse weight of matter; *Melancthon* was full in both, there was a concurrence or complication of many eminent gifts in him. The same *Erasmus*, mentioned last but one, hath a like passage in his Preface to the workes of the Ancients (which he with wonderfull skill and industry redeemed from many mistakes, and set forth more defecate and pure to the view and use of the world) where observing the different veines of divers Authors in their writings, he concludes thus; *Severall men have their severall gifts, as it pleaseth the gift giving Spirit to give to them.* In *Athanasius* we admire a serious perspicuity of speaking, and in *Chrysostome* a flowing Eloquence; in *Basil*, besides his sublimity, a pleasant language; in *Hilary* we see a lofty stile, well matcht with the loftinesse of his matter; in *Cyprian* we reverence a spirit worthy the crowne of Martyrdom; and we are in love with the sweeter incentives and modesty of St *Ambrose*; In *Jerome* we commend his rich treasures of Scripture-knowledge, and must acknowledge in *Gregory* a pure and unspotted sanctity. He shuts up thus; *Least I should be tedious*; others have, from the bounty of the same Spirit, their distinct abilities, by which they are commended to the consciences of the Godly. *The Inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.* And as this is true with respect to the gifts of Illumination, which *Elihu* pitcheth here upon; so 'tis much more true in reference to the gifts of sanctification; The Inspiration of the Almighty giveth a spirituall understanding to know sin, and hate it, to know Christ and love him; so to know as to be conformed unto, yea transformed into that which we know. The Inspiration of the Almighty gives this understanding, *this heart-changing and life-renewing understanding.*

Again, There is a spirit [in man] and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding; The word is *Enos, weake man.*

Hence Note.

God can make the weakest and the unlikelyest of men wise and full of understanding.

It is no matter what the man is, if God will use him; he can make *Enos* to be *Ish*, the weake man strong, the ignorant a learned a knowing man; *Amos* was a husbandman, and God gave him an excellent understanding; the Apostles were Fishermen, and yet the Inspiration of the Almighty made them wise above many; God can make the wise foolish, and fooles wise. The power of God triumphs over all humane power, and in all humane infirmity. So much the Apostle teacheth (1 Cor. 1. 27.) *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weake things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are, that no flesh should glory in his presence.* God chuseth those things which have the greatest improbability for his worke, that the power and successe of the worke may be ascribed to him alone. When we chuse, we should chuse those that are fit for the worke, to which they are chosen; we should not chuse a foole to governe, nor one that is of low parts himselfe to teach others; we should pitch upon the wisest and ablest we can get. *Joseph* said well to *Pharaoh* (Gen. 41. 33.) *Looke out a man discret and wise, and set him over the Land of Egypt.* We cannot make men wiser then they are, and therefore we must chuse and take those that are wise to doe our worke. But when God comes to doe his worke, he often takes the foolish and the weake, because as he calleth them to, so he can fit them for his worke. As the strongest opposition of nature against grace cannot hinder the worke of the Spirit; when the Spirit comes, he will make a proud man humble, a covetous man liberall, an uncleane person modest and temperate; so the weaknesse of nature cannot hinder his worke. If a man be low in parts, God can raise him; *Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength* (Psal. 8. 2.) or (as Christ alledgeth that text,

Math:

Math: 21. 16.) Thou hast perfected praise; one might thinke, Surely God will take the aged, the learned and great for his praise; no, he ordaines praise to himselfe out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, that is, out of their mouths who in all naturall considerations, are no way formed-up nor fitted to shew forth his praise. (Isa. 32. 4.) The heart of the rash (or hasty) shall understand knowledge. Heady and inconsiderate persons, whose tongues (as we say) run before their wits, shall then be grave, advised, and serious, both in what they doe, and (as it followeth) in what they say; *The tongue of the stammerers shall speake plainly,* that is, cleare words with cleare reason; or they shall speake well both in matter and forme, right things rightly. All this the Lord doth that he may honour himselfe, and lift up his owne name only, which alone is to be lifted up. *Never feare, to put an empty vessell to a full fountaine;* no matter how empty the vessell be, if the fountaine be full: God delights in broken weake and empty creatures, that he may mend, strengthen, and fill them. *There is a spirit in man [in weake man] and the Inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding.*

Elihu having shewed the original of mans wisdom to be from God in this 8th verse, makes an inference from it in the 9th; *Their inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding;* And what then? surely even hence it cometh to passe, that,

Verf. 9. Great men are not alwayes wise, neither doe the aged understand Judgement.

It is well conceived by some Interpreters, that the Apostle doth more then allude to, even cite this text (*1 Cor. 1. 26.*) *You see your Calling Brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many Noble are called.* If God should chuse only or mostly wise men, they would be ready to say, we are chosen for our wisdom; If he should chuse and call only or mostly rich men, they would be ready to thinke, we are chosen for our riches; If he should call only or mostly Kings and Princes, they would conclude, we are called for our Greatnesse; Therefore the Lord passeth by most of these, and calleth the Fisherman, calleth the poore man, the ignorant man, and saith, You that have nothing, you that (in the esteeme of the world)

world) are nothing, doe you follow me, who have all things, and can supply you with all. Thus here saith *Elihu*, *Great men are not alwayes wise*; Why not? the reason is because God doth not alwayes bestow wisdom upon them, It is the Inspiration of the Almighty that giveth understanding; Greatnesse doth it not; *Not many wise men after the flesh*, not many Great or Noble are Called. *Elihu* and the Apostle *Paul* speake the same thing almost in the same words. This is also a proove of the divine Authoritie of this booke, as well as that (1 Cor. 1. 19.) taken out of the speech of *Eliphaz* in the 5th Chapter at the 13th verse; *He taketh the wise in their owne craftinesse, &c.*

Great men are not alwayes wise.

The word *alwayes* is not at all in the Originall text, and therefore put in a different Character; *Great men are not wise*; but 'tis well supplied by that word *alwayes*; For the meaning of *Elihu* is not that great men are never wise, but not alwayes wise.

Great men, the Rabbies, the honourable men of the world, men in Authoritie and great place are intended by this word. The Officers which King *Ahasuerus* set over his feast, are called *Rabbies* (*Est.* 1. 8.) so that we may expound it here in the largest sence, as including all sorts and degrees of Great ones.

Great men are not alwayes wise.

רב *Magnus*
unde Rabbi
Magister, qui
multam erudi-
tionem habet.
Honorabiles
Pagn: *Magna-*
tes. Tygur:

That is, wisdom neither floweth from, nor is it alwayes associated with Greatnesse. As some are little yet great, little in the world, yet great in true wisdom; so others are Great, yet little, they are little in wisdom, or have little true wisdom, though they are great in the world, or have great worldly wisdom.

Hence note.

It is not greatnesse of birth, of place, or power; that can make any man wise, nor doth it at all assure us, that a man is wise, because we see him exalted to and settled in a place of power and greatnesse.

The Prophet (*Jer.* 5: 4, 5.) finding some very incorrigible and hardned in sinfull courses, concluded them meane persons, and in the lowest forme of the people. Therefore I said, *Surely these are poore, they are foolish, for they know not the way of the Lord,*

Lord, nor the Judgement of their God. To be poore and foolish is very common; these are poore and foolish (saith the Prophet) but surely I shall finde the Great ones better accommodated with wisdom; and thereupon he resolved, *I will get me to the great men, and will speak unto them, for they have knowne the way of the Lord, and the Judgement of their God*; That is, these great men have had great meanes of knowledge, and we have reason to suppose them as great in knowledge, as they are in place or power. But did the great men answer his expectation? did he find that in them, which he sought and looked for? nothing lesse: The great men proved more foolish, or lesse in true knowledge then the poore, as it followeth, *But these have altogether broken the yoke and burst the bonds*; As if he had said, *I thought these great men had been wise, but I see they are very fooles.* What can be a greater argument of folly, then to breake those yokes and bonds, which the wisdom of God hath put upon us? 'Tis both our wisdom and our freedome to be bound by the most wise and holy will of God; and hence the Prophet accounts this one as strong as a thousand arguments, to prove that the Great men among the *Jewes* were not wise, because they were not only unwilling to be bound to the obedience of the will of God, but wilfully burst those bonds. When Jesus Christ came into the world, the great ones, the *Rabbies* had the least true wisdom, they would not believe on him, nor receive him; yea some boasted of this their unbelieve as an argument of their wisdom (John 7. 48, 49.) *Have any of the Rulers, or of the Pharisees believed on him?* No; they were too wise to believe; Faith in Christ was left to the fooles, and counted folly by those wise men; *But this people* (say they, meaning the common sort or ignorant vulgar) *who knoweth not the Law are cursed.* And they thought them accursed because they believed in and received Jesus Christ, the chiefest blessing. Great men are not alwayes wise in civill things, very rarely in spirituall things; They have not alwayes the wisdom of a man, they seldome have the wisdom of a reall Christian. They are not alwayes worldly wise, or wise for this present world, much lesse are they alwayes wise for the world which is to come. *Great in title, and wise in truth, are a sweete couple, but seldome seene.* If so

• Then there is no taking of things upon trust from the greatest in
the

the world. As it is dangerous to follow the multitude (*Exod. 23. 2.*) the most are usually the worst, and they who are evill, will leade to evill; so there is no following great ones blindfold; for even they are often blind, or (which is worse) will not see; And they who either doe not or will not see their own way, may soone leade others out of the way, and turne them aside to that which is not good.

Again, This first part of the verse (*Great men are not alwayes wise*) is rendred by the Septuagint, *men of many yeares, or great in yeares, are not alwayes wise*. The Original word may refer to greatnesse of age, which consists in having lived many yeares, as well as to greatnesse of honour, which consists in the enjoying of high places and dignities. But I rather adhere to our translation, that the great men here intended are the Great in power and place, not in yeares and dayes, though it be a truth, that such are not alwayes wise; and if we take in that sence also, it is a further confirmation of the generall truth in hand, That wisdome is the gift of God, and therefore those men are not alwayes wise, whom vve might most probably looke upon as such. For as we see Great men, who have the advantage of meanes for education in learning, are not alwayes the wisest; so the aged, vvho have that great advantage of time and experience to gather vvisdome are not; Both often come short in abilities of understanding and prudence, the former of their inferiors, the latter of their Juniors. This is expresse in the latter part of the verse, and therefore needs not be inferred from this first part of it, by way of interpretation; *Great men are not alwayes wise*, then followes this disjunctive proposition;

Neither doe the aged understand Judgement; or, that which is right.

The word *Mishpat* is taken two vvayes in Scripture; first, for the rule of Righteousnesse; *Samuel* told the people, the judgement or manner of the Kingdome, (*1 Sam: 10. 25.*) that is, how the kingdome should be ordered and governed, according to judgement and rules of righteousness. Secondly, Such an actual Administration as is according to that rule of righteousness, is in Scripture called judgement. The aged doe not alwayes understand judgement in either notion; they doe not alwayes

understand the rule, nor doe they alwayes act according to the rule which they understand ; they vvho sayle in one, much more in both these, doe not understand judgement. Sometimes the aged are at a losse and know not vvhat to doe, and oftentimes they are so entangled with their lusts, that they will not doe vvhat they know. Yet here remember, these words are not to be taken as an absolute negation of vvisdome to the ancient , much lesse as a reproach upon them : For usually the aged are most understanding in judgement, and we may more probably and doe more frequently finde Judgement with them, then among those that are young. And therefore when *El'hu* saith, *neither doe the aged understand Judgement* ; his meaning is only this, old age doth not give vvisdome, nor is it the old mans priviledge only, to understand judgement.

Hence note.

As honour or greatnesse of estate, so age or greatnesse of yeares, doth not confer vvisdome upon any man.

Time doth neither stop nor convey knowledge and understanding ; old men have not their knowledge by their Antiquitie, and therefore, *as no man is wise at all times, so no man is made wise by time.* In strict sence, vvisdome is not the daughter of time, but the gift of the eternal. It is not time but divine favour vvhich makes wise. They are soone made wise and learned, whom God will teach. The teachings of God make young men like the ancients in vvisdome, and without his teaching, the aged are like children in folly. God sometimes denieth vvisdome to the Ancient, and sometimes he takes vvisdome from them. And God suffers old men to act like children, to goe out of the way, to doe foolishly, that he may staine the glory of all flesh, and that all might both know and have their dependance on him alone. Hence take two or three deductions.

*Intelligentia
juris non pen-
det a senectute.
Pisc.*

First, From the Connection of these two verses, we learne that, *The Spirit of God is not tyed to any age or degree of men ; The Inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding ; Great men are not alwayes wise, &c.* The Spirit of God is a free Spirit ; and as the Spirit is free because he moves without any desert in the object ; as also because he gives liberally, plentifully, and abundantly ; so the Spirit of God is free as to the choice of objects,
he

he gives here and not there, he paſſeth by this man, and takes hold of that, he ſometimes paſſeth by the rich, and takes the poore, (*Eccle. 9. 15.*) *The poore wiſe man ſaved the Citie*; ſometimes he paſſeth by the old, and takes the young; and he doth all this, that we might aſcribe all to himſelfe, not to the age of man, not to any thing in man. God hath promiſed to be with his Church, and with his Miniſters by his Spirit to the end of the world; but the Spirit hath his choice as to particular men, and none have been more deceived then they that thought the Spirit in bonds or tyed to them; *Come* (ſay they, *Jer. 18. 18.*) *let us deviſe devices againſt Jeremiah*; *For the Law ſhall not periſh from the Prieſt, nor Counſell from the wiſe, nor the word from the Prophet*; The Prieſts are of this opinion, and *Jeremiah* is out of the way, he is a falſe Prophet, and therefore certainly we may proceed in our devices againſt him, for we have the opinion of the Prieſts and Prophets with us; Thus they ſpake, as if the Spirit of God had been bound up to that order. We ought to ſeek wiſdome at the Prieſts mouth; yet they who reſt upon their wiſdome may ſoon be deceived; knowledge may periſh from the Prieſts mouth, and counſel from the ancient. The great Cheate which the Pope hath put upon the world is, *That the Spirit of God is tyed to the ſummes of his Chaire, or that there he cannot erre*. But as particular men, ſo whole Counſells of learned and aged men have erred; True wiſdome is not the birth of time, nor the peculiar of a party, but the free gift of the Spirit of God, who is moſt free, both in what he giveth, and to whom he giveth. Therefore

Secondly, *Let us not pin our faith or our Conſciences upon men, how great, or how Ancient ſoever they are*; Let us give reſpect to the Ancient, and the honourable, (not to doe it is not only uncivill but ſinfull) yet let us not give up our Conſciences to them; *For great men are not alwayes wiſe, neither doe the aged underſtand Judgement*; We muſt not reverence any mans perſon to the prejudice of the truth. The opinions of great or ancient men are not to be received, as Oracles, without debate; we have liberty to Conſider of them, and to Compare them with the rule: We muſt prove all things, and hold faſt that only which is good. A heathen gave that direction to thoſe who heare philoſophicall diſcourſes; *You muſt take off all thoſe conſiderations which concerne the perſon ſpeaking, and only mind what is ſpoken*: his An-

Que in philoſophia dicuntur ea oportet examinatione ejus

qui dicit detra-
ha, seorsum per
se examinari,
Etenim canities
dicentis, gestus
supercilii, &c.
faciunt ad per-
cellendum im-
peritum Audi-
torem. Plu-
tarct de Au-
ditiōe.

tiquity, that he is an old man, and his authority, that he is a great man, must not sway you ; His outward gesture, tone and gravity, his severe or demure lookes, which much affect, almost astonish unlearned auditors, and make them ready to swallow any thing that is uttered, must all be layd aside when the matter deli-
vered and asserted, comes to be examin'd and layd in the ballance. Believe what is said because you judge it true, doe not believe it true because such or such a man hath said it ; because an old man, or a great man, or a good man hath said it. How strictly then and religiously is this to be observed in hearing the word of God, and the doctrines of faith ? in that case be sure to lay aside all that concerns the speaker, and weigh what he speaks alone and single in the Ballance of the Sanctuary.

...Tempora
quippe virtu-
tem non prima
negant, non ul-
tima donant.

Thirdly, Then, *we ought not to despise what young men say, because of their youth.* If old men be not alwayes wise, then wis-
dome may be with the young ; sometimes an opinion is under-
valued, because it is the opinion of a young man ; and truths are
not received, because he that delivers them hath not seene many
dayes. As it is a sin to adore old age, or to give up our faith
and Conscience to it ; so it is a sin to slight youth, in doing so we
may slight the truth. *Paul* saith to *Timothy*, *Let no man despise
thy youth ;* Which as it is a Caution to *Timothy* (as hath been
shewed) to carry himselfe wisely and warily, lest he should oc-
casion others to slight or despise him ; so it is a Caution to the
people, that they should not despise him because of his youth ;
That which is the true glory of *gray hayess*, doth sometimes *Crowne
the youthfull head*, wisdom (I meane) and ripenesse of under-
standing. It was said of a godly woman, *Shee had a youthfull bo-
dy, but an aged mind.* *Samuel* was young in yeares, but in grace
elder then old *Ely* ; *Jeremiah* was young, but how wise did the
Inspiration of God make him ? *Daniel* was young, yet wiser then
all the Magicians and Astrologers ; *Timothy* and *Titus* were
young, yet honourable for pudence and piety ; and therefore,
seeing great men are not alwayes wise, neither doe the aged un-
derstand Judgement, as we should not accept what old men say
because of their age ; so let us not slight what young men say
because of their youth.

Cortore juven-
cula, animo ca-
na fuit. Am-
br: de Agne-
te. Ser: 90.

When God furnisheth young men with abilities, and calleth
them to his worke, even old men must be willing, at least not
dis-

disdaine, to heare them. Christ must be heard in or by whom soever he will speake. God indeed doth usually serve himselfe by the aged, yet he hath abundantly testified that truth is not bound up to old age. Modesty should bridle young men from being over-forward to shew themselves, but it must not shut or seale up their lips. Old men must have the preheminance; *Elihu shewes us that order (v. 7.) I (saith he) said dayes shall speake, and multitude of yeares shall teach wisdom: We must first attend and give eare to our elders. And when we are to chuse Officers or Governours, to chuse ignorant Greene-heads before knowing Gray hayres, were a perverting of all order. Therefore men of yeares having grace and wisdom proportionable, are to be preferred before the younger. In that case it were a shame to advance young men, with a neglect of the aged. But when God gives more grace and understanding to young men then to ancient, our approbation should follow his preparation, and whom he qualifieth best, we should soonest chuse. The order of Nature is good, yet not alwayes fittest to be observed. Right reason and the rule of the word of God must sway and cast our vote, not the age and yeares of men. When Samuel was sent to anoynt a King, in the place of Saul among the sons of Jesse, he looking on Eliab said, Surely the Lords anoynted is before him (1 Sam. 16. 5.) but the Lord said unto him (v. 6.) Looke not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart. Now, as we are not to be taken with the beauty and stature of men, so not with their gray haire and outward gravity. Old men are not alwayes wise; wisdom and a heart for God, a good heart, or a heart to doe good, may dwell with a greene Head, even with a greener then seven, the eighth or greenest of all (so was Davids) that come or stand in a day of Election before us.*

J O B. Chap. 32. Vers. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Therefore I said, Hearken to me : I also will shew mine opinion.

Behold, I waited for your words : I gave eare to your reasons, whilst you searched out what to say.

Yea, I attended unto you : and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words :

Lest ye should say ; We have found out wisdom : God thrusteth him downe and not man.

Now he hath not directed his words against me : neither will I answer him with your speeches.

ELihu having asserted this negative proposition in the former verse, *Great men are not alwayes wise, neither doe the aged understand Judgement*, makes his inference from it in these words.

Vers. 10. *Therefore I sayd hearken to me.*

As if he had said ; *Though I am none of the great men of the world, though I am none of the aged among the sons of men, yet hearken unto me ; for seeing great and aged men are not alwayes wise, nor have ingrossed all wisdom and understanding to themselves, it is possible that some beames of wisdom may shine forth even from so meane a Junior, even from such a puny as (I must confesse) I am.*

We may also make the inference from the 8th verse ; *There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth understanding.* Therefore I said *hearken to me* ; As if he had said, *Though I am a young man, and have not had either those naturall or accidentall advantages of the ancient for the gathering of any great stocke or treasures of wisdom, yet there is an inspiration of the Almighty which giveth understanding.* If the Lord will make use of me, and inspire me, if he please to breath his truths into me, and irradiate my soule with divine light, I may be able to doe and say something in this matter. The inference, you see, followes well and without straine from either of those premises. There-

Therefore I said, hearken to me.

It may be queried, to whom did *Elihu* say this? We translate the words indefinitely, not determining them to this or that person; But the Original seemes to speake personally; *Therefore I said, heare thou me.* Which may be understood two wayes; First, that *Elihu* directed his speech principally to *Job*, *Heare thou what I shall say.* Secondly, that *Elihu* spake to the whole company there present, as if they had been but one man; we may speake in a congregation of hundreds and thousands, we may speake to many, as if there were but one to heare; as what is spoken to a few, may be intended to all. (*Mark* 13. 37.) *What I say unto you,* (my Disciples) *I say unto all, watch.* So that which is said to all, is surely said to every one in the assembly where 'tis said. Though we take *Elihu* here, as speaking directly but to one person, yet we must take him as desiring that every person present should take it as spoken to himselfe; *Hearken to me.*

Hence note first.

When any speake reason, and hold out truth, they are to be heard.

No man should stop his eare with a prejudice to the person. He that speaks truth, deserves to be heard: though (as *Elihu*) he be a young man, or inferior to many in age, yet he is to be heard, though inferior to many in power and experience, yet he is to be heard; (*Eccle* 4. 13.) *Better is a poore and wise child, then an old and foolish King that will not be admonished.* And better is a poore and wise child, then an old man that can give no admonition. As that man is in a sad condition, whether king or subject, that will not be admonished, so that man, be he never so ancient, is not much to be regarded, that is not able to give admonition. But though both discrete young men, and discrete poore men are to be heard when they speak truth and reason, yet that of *Solomon* (*Eccle* 9. 16.) is too often verified; *The poore mans wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard.* Most conclude, if a man be poore, his counsell is so too, and if he be young, how can he be a counsellor? yet, *heare me* (saith *Elihu*).

¶ Sci-
am meam.
Mont.

I also will shew mine opinion, or my knowledge.

I will shew what my understanding is, or what light God hath given me in this case. The words are plaine.

Note from them.

What truth or truths we have received and know, we should communicate and make knowne.

'Tis a duty to shew our opinion when we have a call and an occasion to shew it, as *Elihu* here had. Some have knowledge, who will not shew it; They (which Christ forbids, *Math. 5. 15.*) put their candle under a bushell. God hath lighted a candle, and set it up in some mens spirits, yet they either quite conceale or much obscure it. God hath given them a talent of knowledge, and they like the unprofitable servant, wrap it up in a Napkin. They will not shew their opinion. Not to shew what we have, when called to it, is a deniall that we have it. As good not have a candle, or a talent, as let our candle be hid, or hide our talent. The very Heathen condemned this, while they sayd, *Covered vertue, is buried vertue.* Yea while a man covers his vertues, parts, and abilities, he burieth himselfe alive, or is dead while he lives. As, the Scripture saith, they have only a name to be alive, but are dead, who make a shew of more then they have (*Rev. 3. 2.*) so they have a name to be dead, or may be numbred among the dead, who will not shew what indeed they have.

There are two things which hinder men from shewing their opinion; First, idlenesse, they are loath to take the paines to shew it. Secondly, shamefastnesse; There is a commendable modesty, 'tis not good to be over-forward in shewing our opinion; But that modesty is sinfull, which quite hinders us from shewing our opinion. They who keepe in their knowledge and opinion either through idlenesse, or shamefastnesse, doe almost as ill as they who shew their opinion, and declare their knowledge through pride and high-mindednesse, or meerely to shew themselves, to shew their wit, and to make a noyse of their parts and learning. 'Tis sinfull selfe-pleasing either to know only that we may know, or to publish what we know only to be knowne. With some 'tis nothing that they have knowledge, unlesse others

know

know that they have it. An affectation to appeare knowing, is as bad as to be ignorant. *I will shew mine opinion* (saith *Elihu*) But why would he shew it? We have reason to judge, it was from the honesty of his heart, not from the height of his Spirit. And when ever we shew our opinion, we ought to shew it out of an honest heart, and for honest ends, such as these.

First, To instruct those who are ignorant.

Secondly, To reduce those who are out of the way.

Thirdly, To feed hungry soules with wholesome doctrine.

(*Prov. 10. 21.*) *The lips of the righteous feed many.*

Fourthly, To strengthen the weak.

Fifthly, To confirme the doubtfull.

Sixthly, To comfort the sorrowfull.

Seventhly, To encourage the fearefull.

Eighthly, To quicken the sloathfull in the wayes and worke of God.

Lastly, And above all, That God may be glorified by the use of the talent that he hath given. (*1 Pet. 4. 10.*) *As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of God.* Stewards must not set up their owne, but their Masters Interest. We should minister by every gift as Stewards of the manifold grace of God.

I will shew mine opinion (saith *Elihu*.)

But what haste? *Elihu* it seemeth foresaw some ready to object; Why doe you a young man take upon you to speake in a cause, wherein so many of your Elders and Betters have not prevailed? why are you so busie? 'Tis much boldnes for you, or such as you to declare your opinion in this controversie, wherein such wise, learned, & godly men have, without successe, ingaged already. To this objection, *Elihu* makes a preventing answer, rendring this account of his undertaking; As if he had said, *I have attentively observed all the passages and traverses of this dispute, I have heard all that Jobs friends have offered, whether for vindication of the justice and righteousness of God in laying that great affliction upon him, or for the conviction of Job, to make him see his sin, and sit downe humbled. I have heard all this* (saith *Elihu*) *and upon the whole matter I find, Job is yet unanswered, or that there is need of a further answer to stop his mouth, to silence his complaints, and*

humble him under the hand and soveraigne power of God.

This is the scope and summe of these two verses following.

Vers. 11. *Behold, I waited for your words, I gave eare to your reasons, whilst you searched out what to say.*

Vers. 12. *Yea I attended unto you; and behold, there is none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words.*

You have the generall sence of the text, I shall yet proceed to a more particular explication of it.

Behold, I waited for your words.

יָדַל *moratus est, praestolatus est, expectavit.*

The word which we translate *to waite*, imports three things in Scripture; First, an act of hope, or to be carried towards any thing desirable, with a wonderfull desire to enjoy it; *Hope canseth the soule to breath after fruition*. Secondly, the word implyeth that griefe or trouble which possesseth the mind upon a long stay or detainment of that good which we desire and hope to attaine. Thirdly, it notes, the soules patient waiting (though grieved and burdened with present delayes) for future enjoyment. In all or any of these senses, *Elihu* might say, *Behold, I waited for your words*, I earnestly desired to heare you speake to satisfaction, and I am grieved that you did not; and I would, if need were, patiently waite still, did I not perceive you had done, and quitted your hands of this worke.

Behold, I waited for your words.

לְדַבְּרוֹ כִּי

Mr. Broughton renders, *Behold, I waited through your speech, or, into your words*. I stood still, but I have not been asleep, I have long expected, you would say what is right, and I have seriously considered what you sayd, *I waited for your words*;

I gave eare to your reasons.

Attendi usq; ad sensa vestra; Iun: i.e. Accuratisime Et quam penitissime. sensa animi vestri explora-
vi. Id:

That is, to find what convincing reason was couched in your arguments. The Hebrew is, *I gave eare to your understanding*; That is, I attended to find out your apprehensions, or to gather up your sence in this matter, that I might not mistake your meaning, nor answer at randome. The vulgar translation reads it, *I have heard your wisdom*; That is, what wisdom there was in your

your words. The truth or reason that is in words, is the wisdom of them. So that, when *Elihu* saith, *I gave care to your reasons, or, to your understanding*, it intimates that he tooke the exactest heed he possibly could to find out the utmost tendency and purpose of their discourse. As if he had said; *I have weighed every tittle that ye have spoken, and tryed it by mine care, to find whether it were solid yea or no.*

There is one clause further to be opened in this verse; *I gave care to your reasonings,*

While ye searched out what to say.

This implyeth that *Jobs* friends did ever and anon, take time to consider either each man with himselfe, or that they consulted one with another, what answer to shap and make to *Job*.

Whilest ye searched out.

The word which we translate to *search out*, notes the strictest search after that which is hidden, remote and secret. 'Tis applied (*Deut?* 13. 14.) to that care which Judges ought to take in finding out the truth of an accusation brought against enticers to Idolatry. The strictness of the Originall is, *While ye searched out words.* As if he had said, *I am perswaded you have strained your selves to the utmost, to find out what to say, you did not speake what came next, but searched for your answers.*

We may learne a good lesson from the practice of *Elihu*; we see he was no idle hearer; yea in him we have the description or character of an active hearer; *I waited for your words, I gave care to your reasonings, while ye searched out what to say.*

Hence note.

We must diligently heare and give care, weigh and consider what is spoken, before we give answer.

No man is well prepared to answer, but he that hath been an attentive hearer. And as no man can be a fit answerer in point under disputation, so no man can be a fruitfull practiser in point of instruction, but he that hath been a diligent hearer. 'Tis our duty, when the word is preacht, to waite, not for a sound of words, not for fine words, or words dressed up with affected eloquence, but for sound savory words, for words that have

Audivi prudentiam vestram. Vulg: Diligentissime auscultavi rationes vestras, quas ex & p: intelligentia vestra attulisti, & quas doctas esse putasti et ad rem aptas. Merc:

Scrutatus, perscrutatus est remota & obscura.

weight and light in them, for words that have strength and authority in them, to prevaile upon the heart, and conquer us to obedience. These are the only words, worth the waiting for; and for these we ought to waite.

Secondly, Before *Elihu* comes to give his opinion, he tells *Jobs* friends, that he had diligently heard the matter out, even all their reasonings and searchings.

Hence note.

We must not make a judgement from any one part of a discourse, we must take all together.

We must compare the first and last, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the beginning and ending of what is sayd; We must looke quite through. 'Tis not ingenuous to picke up this or that passage, to take a piece here, and a piece there; we can never make a true judgement, till the whole is layd together. As, many exceedingly mistake about the works of God, so about the words of men, because they judge the whole by this or that part: Whereas they should judge of the parts by the whole. As therefore we ought not to make conclusions about the providentiall works of God, till the last Act, or till all is concluded; so we must not judge the discourses of men, till the last word; or till they have concluded their discourse. Heare a man out, and then answer him.

Ab æquo attentionem sibi conciliat. Merc:

Thirdly, *Elihu* seemes to challenge it as his due to be heard. speake, after he had fully heard them speaking.

Hence note,

They who have had the patience to heare others, ought to have the priviledge of being heard themselves.

Heare me, saith Elihu; Why so? I have heard you. It is but equall and rationall, that he should have liberty of speaking, who hath shewed an attentive perseverance in hearing.

From the last branch of the verse, *while ye searched out what to say.*

Observe.

We ought to ponder and try what we speake, before we speake it.

The worke of the tongue must follow that of the understanding.

ing. (Eccl: 12. 10.) *The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words, or words of delight, words of pleasure.* The preacher sought; But how did he seeke? He sought diligently and earnestly. The preacher sought, but in what way did he seeke? surely he sought by diligent study and earnest prayer, *to find out acceptable words.* What words were those? not *men-pleasing words*, not soft words, which might passe with all sorts, or humour all phantasies, not such words as would serve for pillows under bad mens elbows. The acceptable words which the Preacher sought, were words of truth and sobriety, words of power and Authority; in no other sence may we seeke out acceptable words, or words of delight; nor is there any true delight, but in words of truth. Thus every faithfull Preacher should seeke to find out acceptable words; every holy and wholsome doctrine is made up of such words. Only those doctrines and exhortations which are formed and composed of such words, are (as the Apostle saith of the great doctrine of Jesus Christ, manifested in the flesh to save sinners) *faithfull sayings, and worthy of acceptance* (1 Tim: 1. 15.) *Elihu* tooke notice of this in *Jobs* friends, they did not speak hand over head, but searched what they might say most to the purpose (as they judged) of the cause in hand, and to the profit of their hearers.

Elihu thought he had not yet spoken enough in way of apologie for himselfe. And therefore the penman of this dispute represents him speaking further, yet much to the same sence.

Vers. 12. *Yea, I attended unto you, and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words.*

I attended unto you; That is, I did not only desire to receive full satisfaction from you, but I attended, hoping at last to find it. I stayed, I did not make haste, nor did I hasten you. Some explain the word with a great significancy, I did as thoroughly consider and attend what was sayd, as if I had looked into you. Thus (saith *Elihu*) *I attended unto you.*

Usg; ad intima vestra considerabam vos.
Drus:

But what did he find? He found two faults in their words after he had attended unto them thoroughly. First, he found them faulty, because *none of them had convinced Job.* Their proofes did not make good their accusations. The second fault, which *Elihu* found,

found, was, They had not refuted *Jobs* assertion. As if he had said, *Ye have spoken much, but upon the matter have done little: I waited, & I attended, expecting great things from you, but I have bin deceived in my expectation. For having taken out the strength and substance, the spirits and quintessence of your speech, I find nothing coming up, either to a conviction of Job, as faulty in matter of fact, nor to an answer of him, as defective in matter of argument. So that when I have layd all that ye have spoken in the ballance, it weighes too light, Job is your match, yea, he hath over-matcht you.*

Behold, there is none of you that convinceth Job.

עליון The Hebrew word which we here translate *to convince*, answers the Greeke in the New Testament, which is also translated, *To reprove or convince*. And both the Hebrew and the Greek, carry a threefold signification:

עליון First, to prove, or to make good what is affirmed, either first by reason and argument, or, secondly, by testimony and authority. When such proofes and reasons, such testimonies and authorities are brought in, as a man can make no exceptions against, or cannot evade nor reply to, then he is convinced. The Apostle giving a description of faith (*Heb: 11. 1.*) faith, *It is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence (or conviction) of things not seene*. The Spirit of God makes conviction before faith acts. He brings such proofes, such cleare evidences, - that though the thing be not seene, yet the soule sits downe convinced, that it is so, as fully as if we had seene it. The greatest conviction we have to believe, is from authority and testimony; yea, that's properly and only faith, when we consent to a thing upon the testimony and authority of another.

עליון Secondly, The word signifies to reprove, or rebuke with words. (*Matth: 18. 15.*) *Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, goe and tell him of his fault*. To reprove a man, is first to tell him of his fault, and then to blame him for it. Every mans fault must be clearely proved, before he can be justly reprov'd. Thus the Baptist reprov'd *Herod* (*Luke 3. 19.*) And because Light proves, therefore it also reproveth (*John 3. 20.*) *Every one that doth evill, hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd*. The same word is used (*Eph: 5. 11.*) *Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of dark-*

darkness, but rather reprove them. And againe (1 Tim: 5. 20.) *Them that sin* (that is, either openly, before all, or whose sin hath been proved before all) *rebuke before all* ; and, as the same Apostle directs (Tit: 2. 25.) *Rebuke them sharply.*

Thirdly, The word signifieth, as to prove and reprove, so to chasten and correct, to rebuke by the hand as well as by the tongue (Heb: 12. 5.) *Ye have forgotten the exhortation which our heavenly Father speaketh unto you as unto children ; my son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him.* When thou art rebuked of him by blowes, or receivest sensible convictions. (Rev: 3. 19.) *Whom I love I rebuke and chasten.* Here in the Text we must understand the word in the first sense. *There is none of you that hath convinced Job* ; That is, ye have not proved what ye have sayd ; Ye have called him an hypocrite, and told him that he hath oppressed the poore, and detained the right of the fatherless ; But ye have proved none of these evils against him. Ye have not proved the matter of fact, that he might sit downe penitentially confessing himselfe such an offender, as ye have accused him to be.

Hence note.

We can never convince another by what we say, untill we prove what we say.

If we reprove any man for an errour in his judgement, and doe not prove it to be an errour ; or if we reprove a man for sin in practice, and doe not prove his practice sinfull, or that he hath practised that sin, no conviction follows. What is sayd and not proved comes to the eare only, not to the conscience. Therefore saith Christ (John 8. 46.) *Which of you convinceth me of sin.* Find a spot in my life if you can. I know you are ready to slander me with, but you cannot convince me of evill. It is sayd of Apollos (Acts 18. 28.) *He mightily convinced the Jewes.* How did he convince them ? not by reprovng them only, for not receiving the Messias ; he did not barely tell them, ye are a company of unbelievers : but he reprov'd them by proving the necessity of their receiving Christ the Messias, and the evill of rejecting him, shewing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. Here was prooffe, and so conviction followed. He convinced them by authority, by the testimony of the word, comparing Scripture with

with Scripture, the prophesie, with the history of Christ. The Apostle would have the Ministers of the Gospel mighty at this worke (*Tit. 1. 8.*) They must hold fast the faithfull word, that they may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gain-sayers. Not only must they be able to rebuke gain-sayers, this will not doe it; they must also convince them, or stop their mouths. (*James 2. 9.*) If any of you have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the Law as transgressours. How doth the Law convince? Not only by reproving, but by proving. It shewes us a rule, and saith, there you have departed from it; here is the line, and there ye have transgressed, or gone over it. Thus ye are convinced, that ye are transgressors. He is both wise and faithfull, he doth his worke like a workman that needeth not be ashamed, who not only gives reproofe but prooffe, either of error in judgement, or of evill in practise. For the close of this poynt, I may shew you three great convincers.

First, The holy Spirit of God; This office of the Spirit Christ sets forth (*John 16. 7.*) I will send the Comforter, and when he is come (what shall he doe?) He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of Judgement; That is, he will bring prooffe home to the conscience, to shew sinners their evill state and evill lives; He will also bring home to their spirits the insufficiency of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and so overcome their unbelief, that they shall not be able to refuse the offers of grace. He will likewise shew them such reasons why they ought to be holy, and walke in the wayes of righteousness, that they shall neither have power nor will to gain-say.

The second great convincer, is Conscience. They who were so forward to accuse the woman taken in adultery (*John 8. 9.*) were at last convicted by their owne Conscience, and went out one by one; Their conscience told them they were guilty, if not for that sin, yet of other sins as bad as that. They were so far before from judging themselves for, that they tooke no notice of their owne faults; they were severe against the woman, but they flattered themselves, till Christ made their owne consciences, their convincers. And surely conscience will one time or other convince to purpose; They who have refused or outstood conviction by the word, yea and put by the motions of the Spirit, shall at last find conscience convincing and speaking home to them.

The

The third great Convincer, is Jesus Christ in person ; Of him in the performance of this office, the Apostle speakes clearly (*Jude v: 15.*) *Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousand of his Saints* (And what comes he to doe ?) *To execute judgement upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* Christ will make the greatest of ungodly ones in that great day to acknowledge, that all their hard speeches which they have spoken against the Saints, or godly men, were spoken against him. When prophane men are among their wicked companions, they can jeare at the godly professors of the name of Christ, even while they pretend to honour Christ ; But Christ will make them see, that they scorned him, while they scorned the least of those that feared him, and believed on his name. The great day will be a day not only of executing Judgement, but of conviction, every mouth shall be stopped, and all the world of wicked men shall become guilty in their owne sight before God. These are the three great Convincers. The holy Spirit of God, the Conscience of every man, and Jesus Christ in the judgement of the great day.

And let those who now undertake that great worke of conviction, often remember (which was a little before mentioned and set downe) the method to be used and observed in it ; First, prove the matter, and then reprove the man. None were ever wrought to any good, by bare reproofe, much lesse by force. Men are not to be driven into the faith by fire and sword, by terrors and imprisonments ; conviction must doe it ; and that will doe it to purpose. This is the first thing which *El'hu* blamed and burdened *Jobs* friends with ; They reprov'd him, but did not bring sufficient convincing prooffe against him. *There was none of you that convinced Job.*

Secondly, He lays this to their charge, that *They had not answered his words.* As ye have not proved your owne allegations, so ye have not refuted nor infirmed his reasons.

But how could *Elihu* say, They had not answered his words, when to every word he spake we find their severall answers ? Then *Eliphaz the Temanite answered and said ;* Then *Bildad the Shuhite answered and said ;* The like is said of *Zophar the Naamathite.* They had been answering all the while, yet saith *Elihu,*
M Behold,

Behold, there was none of you that answered his words. I shall resolve this doubt, by giving this note ; which was also given upon the 3d verse, where see more.

Unlesse we answer home to the matter, and (as we say) hit the nail on the head, we have given no answer. We have not answered, unlesse we give a satisfactory answer. When the Respondent in Schooles acquits himselfe well, The Moderator brings him off honorably, saying, *Thy Answers suffice.* *Jobs* friends had been answering long, and they made many long answers, but *Elihu*, the Moderator was forced to tell them, ye have not answered sufficiently.

Lastly, *Elihu* having heard all their answers, and finding that they did not reach a prooffe against *Job*, nor answer his reasonings and replies, he speaks himselfe.

Hence note.

When we have weighed all duely, and find that others have not done the deed, we must not dissemble our judgements, nor flatter them in their faulty answers.

Elihu would not doe so, and the reason why he would not, is layd downe in the next words.

Vers. 13: *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom ; God thrusteth him downe not man.*

In the former verse *Elihu* shewed his owne disappointment, while he waited upon others ; *I attended unto you* (saith he to *Jobs* three friends) *and behold, there was none of you that convinced Job, or that answered his words ;* Then followes, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom, &c.* In which words *Elihu* proceeds with his Preface, that he might the more fairely fall into discourse with *Job*; for having told *Jobs* friends that he had waited in vaine, for satisfaction from their answers or replies, they having not convinced him, either by solid reason, or by Authentick Authority and testimony, that he was so bad as they judged him to be ; He adds, this I affirme.

Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom.

That is, lest ye should say it boastingly, and cry victory against this

his afflicted man. The word is often used in Scripture to signifie saying with boasting, or speaking in pride of spirit. The Baptist (*Math. 3. 9.*) tells the Pharisees, *Thinke not to say within your selves, we have Abraham to our father*; his meaning is, doe not speake of your pedigree boastingly nor proudly: that ye are *Abrahams* children will doe you no good, unlesse ye are good, like your father *Abraham*, and doe as he did. So here, *Lest ye should* (*proudly*) *say, we have found out wisdom*; we have found the mystery of the whole matter, we have found out the key, which unlocks this secret, or as Mr *Calvins* translater wittily as well as truly expresseth, *We have found out the beane in the Cake*, we say, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom*; That is, that which will surely prove us wise men, and gaine us the reputation of wisdom among all wise and knowing men. What their speciall resolve was, which they counted wisdom, followes in the close of the verse according to our reading, *God thrusteth him downe not man*. But before I deale with that conclusion, I shall briefly note two things from those words, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom*.

*Rem acu teri-
mus & ipsum
cardinan in quo
totz controver-
sia veritur de
Jobo. Dru:*

First, *Man is very apt to speake boastingly, to have high thoughts, and then to utter great words of himselfe*. Man is a proud piece of flesh, and a small matter will make him swell his pride, and spread his plumes (like that naturally-painted bird) if not explicite in words, yet his spirit will swell, and be puffed up with trowing conceits of himselfe. The Prophet *Habakkuk* describes this temper (*Chap. 2. 4.*) *He that is lifted up, his spirit is not upright in him; A proud spirit is alwayes a false spirit. They who thinke highly of themselves, thinke themselves higher then they are*. And 'tis a great argument that man is naturally very proud, because God hath given so many stops and checks to his pride, or hath made so many provisions against it. The very contrivance of the work of Redemption in that way by the hand of Jesus Christ, had this great designe in it; For as the chiefe designe in reference to man was his salvation (that was the ultimate end as to man) so there was another designe in it, why God would save man that way, which the Apostle layeth downe (*1 Cor. 1. 29.*) *That no flesh should glory in his sight*; While God intended to give man glory, he took a course to cut off all glorying from man. God would not set up man againe to worke his owne salvation,

lest he should be proud of his workes. Though we are now called *to work out our owne salvation* (Phil. 2. 12.) yet it is wholly wrought by another ; and we are there commanded to work out our owne salvation *with feare* and trembling, not with presumption and boasting.

Againe, How apt is man to boast of any good he doth ? seeing he is not ashamed to boast sometimes when he doth evill, and of that which is evill, even of the lusts and lustings of his evill heart. (*Psal. 10. 3.*) *The wicked boasteth of his hearts desire.* And what good is there in the desire of a wicked mans heart ? He (as such) can desire nothing, but what is worle then nothing, sin or vanity, and yet he boasts of it.

Yea, man is ready to boast, not only of evill done, but of his ability to doe evill ; They in the Prophet boasted that they *were mighty to drinke wine, and men of strength to mingle strong drinke,* (*Isa. 5. 22.*) How doe some please themselves that they are in power, only, because that gives them an advantage to oppresse whom they please, or all those with whom they are displeased. David saw that spirit ruling and raging in spitefull *Dreg*, whom he therefore checks, (*Psal. 52. 1.*) *Why boastest thou thy selfe in mischief, O mighty man ?* The Apostle found those (*Phil. 3. 19.*) who *gloried in their shame* ; That is, in sinfull practises (even making their belly their God) whereof they ought to be ashamed. The Prophet spake of their like long before, (*Isa. 3. 9.*) *They declare their sin as Sodome ; they hide it not ;* As if it had been their ornament and their honour, their beauty and bravery to be wicked.

But especially if bad men doe that which is good, they boast of it. A carnal man may for the matter doe good ; yea, he may have a zeale for God. *Jehu* said, *Come see my zeale for the Lord ;* (*2 Kings 10. 16.*) But *Jehu* desired more to have his zeale for the Lord seene, then to be zealous for the Lord. And so his was indeed zeale for himselfe, not for the Lord. The Pharisees did many good things, but they could not forbear boasting in the good they did ; They doe all (saith Christ, who knew not only what they did, but with what heart) to be seene of men, or to have prayse with men. Yea, not only are evill men ready to boast of the good they doe, but the temptation lies hard also upon godly men to doe so, their hearts are often unduely transported,

as with the thoughts of their gifts, parts, and graces, so with what they doe through the gift of grace. Our very graces, much more our outward priviledges, may be an occasion of boasting. Pride and boasting are weeds which grow up from the best and richest soyle. 'Tis rare to see any man rich in gifts and graces, and poore in spirit; poverty of spirit is the purest and truest riches of grace.

Secondly, As to the particular here spoken of, *Left ye should say, we have found out wisdom.*

Note.

Man is very prone to make boast of or glory in that which he calleth wisdom.

When he hath found out (though but supposed) wisdom, he cannot containe, he must cry it up. It is said of the old Mathematician, when (after long study and beating his braines) he had found out a Conclusion in Geometry; he ran about the Citie (as if transported) or ravished with this loud out-cry, *I have found it, I have found it*; and thus *Jobs* friends were ready to cry out, *they had found, they had found out wisdom.* There is indeed a very great temptation in the finding out or attaining of wisdom, to puff man up, and to make him vaine-glorious. We have great cause to be humbled, that we have so little wisdom; and they that have any store (as they thinke) more then their neighbours, are in great danger of being proud of it. *Knowledge puffeth up,* (1 Cor. 8. 1.) When the head is full, the heart grows high. Yet this is to be understood of literall knowledge, not of spirituall, or of knowledge when and where it is alone without grace, not of gracious knowledge. The more a gracious man knowes, the more humble he is, because his knowledge shewes him his own vileness and emptiness; but the more a carnall man knowes, the more proud he is, because (while such) whatsoever or how much soever he knoweth, he knoweth not himselfe, nor doth he know any thing as *he ought to know it*, as the Apostle speakes there at the second verse. And as meere naturall men, so they who are but smatterers, or beginners in the wayes of godliness, are also very ready to be transported with an opinion of their parts and knowledge. And therefore, the same Apostle gives it in charge to *Timothy* (1 Tim. 3. 6.) that he who is called and received unto

unto Office in the Church, should not be a *novice*; he means it not so much of one that is young in yeares, as of one that is young in the faith, a new plant in the Church, or one newly converted. And he gives this as a reason, *Lest being puffed up* (with pride he meanes) by being in such a function, or by having such reputation for wisdom and knowledge, as is requisite to a Gospel Minister, *he* (which is a sad fall, if not a down-fall into utter ruine) *fall into the condemnation of the devill*. Not that the devill will condemne him for his pride, no, the more proud men are, the more the devill approves of them; nor is it the devills office to condemne, it is his office to execute; he is the executioner, not the Judge; and what ever he condemneth any man for, he will not condemne him for pride, no nor for any sin. So that when the Apostle saith, *Lest he fall into the condemnation of the devill*, it is as if he had said, *Lest he be condemned for the same sin that the devill was condemned for, which was pride*: And it was pride (for he is the right father of the *Gnosticks*) arising out of a high opinion, or conceit of his owne wisdom, and knowledge. Zophar sayd (*Job 11. 12.*) *Vaine man would be wise*. But is it an argument of a mans vanity that he would be wise? it is a mans duty to be wise, that's a good desire; why then doth he say, *Vaine man would be wise*? The meaning is, *Vaine man would be in account for wisdom*, he would be reckoned among wise men, or he desires more to be thought wise, then to be wise. *A vaine man, indeed, cannot desire any good, but in reference to some evil that cleaves to it*; and upon that account he may desire to be wise. The first sin came into the world by an attempt to get wisdom, or by a proud thought in the hopes of attaining farther wisdom. The wisdom which our first parents sought for, was not wisdom to know God, for that is the most excellent wisdom, *It is eternall life to know God*; So then it was not wisdom to know God, but it was wisdom to be *knowing as God* which they affected, they would be high and lifted up above the rate of a creature in knowledge, and that was their ruine. And I shall shew (in two things) why there is such a temptation in wisdom, or the reason why when we have found out that which hath a shew of wisdom in it, we are so forward to applaud our selves, & boast in it.

First, 'Tis so, because wisdom is no common Commodity, as I may say; wisdom is but in few hands, if you consider the multi-

multitude of men in the world. Now that which few have, all who have it are ready to be proud of. No man is proud of that which is every mans; no man is proud that he is a man, or proud that he hath reason, because that is common to all men; but all men are not wise, all men are not learned, all men have not an improved wisdom, reason, and understanding; that hath a peculiarity in it, and therefore of that many are proud.

Secondly, Wisdom is not only rare, but very usefull, and (which reacheth this poynt more fully) very ornamentall; and how apt are we to be proud of our ornaments? A man is not proud of his ordinary Clothes, nor a woman of her every-day dresse, but when a man or woman have their ornaments and Jewells on, their Gay-cloathing and rich apparel on, then they are apt to be proud and lifted up, so it is in this case; Wisdom is like Gay-cloathing, it is a Jewell, an ornament, and therefore man is under a temptation when he hath any thing of wisdom, especially any eminency of wisdom about him, to be lifted up and despise others: yea, to arrogate great things to himselfe, and to presume that he can doe no small matters with his braine, or the engine of his understanding. It is a great attainment to be full of knowledge, and full of humility, high in parts, and lowly in spirit; *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom.*

God thrusteth him downe not man; or as others read, God hath cast him downe not man.

The Omnipotent doth Toss him not man, saith Mr. Broughton. The word signifies to *toss a man* (as it were) in a blanket, That is, to toss him as we please farre enough from his pleasure, or to toss him in open view. As if they had sayd, see how the omnipotent tosseth this man; *The Omnipotent tosseth him not man*. There are two references of these words given by Expositors.

First, Some expound them as the words of *Elihu*. Secondly, Others as the words of *Jobs* three friends.

First, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom. I* (saith *Elihu*) say, *God shall thrust him downe not man*. That's the principle by which I will deale with *Job*, and so thrust him downe from that opinion which he hath of himselfe, and humble him, (that's the sence of the words (*thrust him downe*) according to this interpretation) God shall doe it and not man. Some of the learned

Non est hoc opus ullius hominis ut lobum deprecatur a sua sententia, sed divina planè virtute opus est. Cum tamen deus humano ministerio utatur gratiose ad perficiendas res huiusmodi absit ut mihi arrogarem, quod deus sermone meo effecturus est.
Iun:

learned insist much upon this interpretation, wherein *Elihu* is supposed making a great discovery of his humility, as not daring to undertake *Job* himselfe, but going about it in the strength and power of God; As if he had said, *'Tis a worke above or too hard for man to put Job off from that opinion wherein he is settled. To doe this is a worke worthy of God, nor can it be done by any power, but that which is properly divine. And seeing God is graciously pleased to use the ministry of man for the bringing about such workes of Grace; farre be it from me that I should arrogate and assume that to my selfe which God is pleased to work by my word.* We may parallel this speech of *Elihu* with two other places of Scripture, which will give light to it. First, (*Gen. 42. 16.*) *And Joseph answered Pharaoh, saying, It is not in me, but God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace.* When *Pharaoh* proposed to him his Dreames of the seven leane kine, and of the seven thin ears of Corne, *Joseph* professed it was not in him to expound them, but only in God; and that God would doe it he was confident; *God shall give to Pharaoh an answer of peace.* I owne no wisdom in or of my selfe, enabling me to resolve this question, or to open this secret; *If ever I doe it, 'tis God who doth it, not I;* unlesse he reveale the secret unto me, I cannot reveale it unto thee. Thus also spake *Daniel*, (*Dan. 2. 27.*) When all the wise men of *Babylon* were foyle, and gravell'd at the Kings propoll; *The secret which the King hath demanded, cannot the wise men, the Astrologers, the Magicians, and the Sooth-sayers shew unto the King.* They cannot doe it; it is not put by way of interrogation, cannot they doe it? but *they cannot*, by way of negative assertion; how then can it be done? or who can doe it? He answers, *But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh knowne to the King Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter dayes.* As if he had said, *As thy Magicians cannot, so I will not undertake to reveale the secret, but God both can and will, He will surely doe it, yea, he is now doing it; the text speakes as of a present act, He maketh knowne to the King, &c.* Thus (according to the exposition before us) *Elihu* saith here, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wisdom; I tell you plainly, I will not undertake him, and I am much assured ye cannot, therefore Let God thrust him downe, let God deale with him, and conquer him, not I, not you, not man, not any man. If God will use me as a poore instrument to doe it,*

I am ready, but the whole efficacy and power must be from himselfe. This carrieth a profitable and a holy sence; every good man ascribes the effect of all that he speaks in perswading others for good to the power of God. God must convert the sinner, not man, not the preacher; God must humble the proud, not man, God must cast him downe from his high thoughts, or cast downe the high thoughts that are in him, not man; God must soften and breake the hard heart, not man; in a word, 'tis God who both thrusteth man downe by a gracious work of repentance and selfe-
 abhorrence, and rayseth him up by a powerfull worke of faith and holy confidence in Jesus Christ: when man hath done his best, he can doe nothing effectually, only God can. Whatsoever good man doth, God doth it in him and by him. Hence those creature-abasing and Christ-exalting questions (1 Cor. 3. 5.) *Who is Paul? and who is Apollo? but Ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man.* Paul puts a slight upon himselfe, and a slight upon all instruments, that the whole power might be of God, as he concludes (v. 7.) *So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase.* God only thrusts man downe from his vaine and carnal state, God only lifts him up unto a blessed and a heavenly state. This, you see, is an improveable interpretation, as the words are supposed spoken by *Elihu*.

But, I rather referre them to *Jobs* friends, being collected or gathered up by *Elihu*, as the issue of their whole discourse with *Job*. *God thrusteth him downe, and not man.* This is it, that you meane (saith *Elihu*) this is the top of your wildome, the flower and Creame, the summe and substance of all your arguments. All that ye have layd is reducible to this one position, *God thrusteth him downe, not man*, and therefore he is a wicked man; This is the wildome which ye glory to have found.

Now though we take the words as the summe of what *Jobs* friends had spoken, collected and drawne together by *Elihu*, yet there is some variety in opening the sence of them; I will but touch a little at what is offered by severall Interpreters, and stay upon that which I conceive most proper to the place.

First, Some conceive that in these words an account is given why *Jobs* friends gave over speaking, or why they stood silent, either resolving to speake no more, or presuming they had spo-

Elibu de amicorum Jobi silentio conquerenti, sic respondet. Fecimus de industria, non oportet hominem exagitare Jobum: seti est quod a deo exagitetur.

Varab:

*Cum deum pro-
pellat eum nihil
ultra necesse est
ut ab homine
impugnetur; ut
afflictio insuper
addatur afflictio;
quia satis est
quod deum eum
ob sua peccata
persequatur.*

Rab: Levi.

*Est animi ob-
firmatio omne
amplius loquen-
di desiderium
adimit cum eo
homine, quum
nemo homo po-
terit, sed deus
solum de ista a-
nimi pertinacia
depellere. Iun:*

*Cum Job affi-
gatur & inusti-
tato modo affi-
gatur, idq; adeo*

ken all; As if they had said, *We have found out and concluded among our selves, that 'tis most adviseable for us, or our wisest way to say no more; you possibly thinke we can say no more, but we doe industriously forbear to say any more; why should we trouble him any further; God troubleth and vexeth him enough. God thrusteth him downe, therefore let not man; And therefore we thinke it our wilsdome (having sayd this) to forbear and give him over, for we will not adde affliction any longer to the afflicted. So that as the Apottle speaks concerning the repenning Corinthian (1 Epist. Cor. 2. 6, 7.) Sufficient to such a man is this punishment which was inflicted of many, so that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow;* so *Jobs* friends (according to this Exposition) are brought in speaking the same sence; Sufficient to him is that punishment which hath been inflicted on him by one, even by God, so that contrariwise we ought rather to comfort him, lest he should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow.

Secondly, Others give their meaning thus rigidly; *We thinke it our wilsome to say no more, but to remit or give him up to God, as a man that is obstinate and will not be convinced. Elibu* told them a little before that none had convinced *Job*; and here they are represented, saying, we indeed have left him to God, as unconvincible by us, and therefore, *God must thrust him downe, not man*; there is a truth in this. Some men are so obstinate in their wayes, though evill, and stiffe in their opinions, though grossest errors, that there is no more dealing with them, such as these are past mans skill to recal or reclaime, they must be left to God. As in extreame dangerous cases of travel in child-birth, the good women sigh and give over, saying; *This is not womans worke, we must leave her to the man*; So in dealing with some men, after long labour and no successe, we must even say, This is not mans worke, he must be left to God, who alone can thrust him downe, man cannot.

Thirdly, That which is, I conceive, chiefly intended, take thus; I (saith *Elibu*) have undertaken after long waiting and expectation to shew mine opinion, *Lest ye should say, we have found out wilsdome*; That is, an argument so strongly concluding *Job* a wicked man, that no wise man can object against it. But what was that irrefragable argument, by which *Jobs* friends hoped to conclude him, and stop his mouth for ever? Surely that which followeth in this

this verse, *God thrusteth him downe, not man*; That *Jobs* friends ^{*justo, qui no-*} layd the maine ground-worke of their hard opinion concerning ^{*fallere nec falsi*} him in the dealings of God with him, is evident by what hath ^{*potest in suo ju-*} been shewed from many passages quite through the Booke; All ^{*dicto, consequi-*} which may be resolved into the sence, now given, of this one; *God* ^{*tur plane Jo-*} *thrusteth him downe, not man*, and therefore he is a wicked man. ^{*bum esse im-*} ^{*probit Aquin-*} ^{*Druſi Mere*}

Hence observe.

First, *The afflictions and thrustings downe of some men are eminently from the hand of God.*

Every affliction is from God; but some are more from God. As God is more visibly seene in the lifting up of some men, so in the casting downe of others. Every man that is lifted up, is lifted up by the hand of God; 'Tis the most High, who one way or other, setteth any man on high; but in setting up some men on high, his workings are so high, that every man may see them and say, The finger of God is there, the hand of God hath done it. 'Tis thus also in thrusting men downe; every affliction, every thrusting downe, is from God, there is a hand of God in it; for as *Eliphaz* spake (Chap. 5. 6.) *Affliction comes not forth of the dust, nor doth trouble spring out of the ground*. Whence then are troubles? Surely they drop downe from heaven; they are from the earth as to the contracting of them, but from heaven as to the contriving of them. Yet there are some troubles which fall from heaven more apparently then others doe; That is, there is more of God, more of the hand of God in such a dispensation, then there is in others, though there be a hand of God in every one: therefore say *Jobs* friends, *God thrusts him downe, and not man*; this means afflictions are mighty stroakes from heaven. For though God hath raised up and used instruments against him, yet himselfe hath appeared most against him.

Secondly, Observe.

Those afflictions wherein God doth eminently appeare against a man, seeme to beare the greatest witnesse against him of his sinfulness or wickednesse.

That was the scope of *Jobs* friends, This is, say they, an undeniable argument, that the man is wicked, because there is such an eminent hand of God upon him. This was the foundation upon

which they built all their severall censures of him; yea, their hardest sentences against him. And there is a faire probability in this way of arguing upon foure Considerations.

First, It may be urged, thus; God is just; (men indeed are often unjust and unrighteous in the evill which they bring upon others; but God is just) and therefore he would not lay his hand upon any man in this manner, unlesse he were a wicked man. Surely his iniquity hath found him out, whom the hand of God hath thus found out.

Secondly, God is mercifull, he is gracious, (*Lament. 3. 33.*) *He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of men.* Now, if God hath declared himselfe to unwilling to grieve the Children of men, surely, when we see him so willingly grieve a man, as he hath grieved this or that man, may we not say, he is a wicked man? Judgement is called Gods *strange worke*, but in judging some he acteth as if judgement were his *proper worke*, as if he were in his Element when he is laying heavie stroaks on their backs; therefore may we not conclude such among the wicked?

Thirdly, *God is wise*; he cannot be deceived concerning any man; therefore there is some great reason why he afflicts, and what reason can more probably be given of a great affliction, then some great sin? As God is so true that he will not deceive any man, so he is so wise that he cannot be deceived in any man. He cannot misse his mark, nor fall upon a wrong subject in his dispensations; therefore we have faire warrant to say, that a man against whom God appeares so much, appeares very foule to him, what ever faire appearances he may have among men.

Fourthly, Take this Consideration also, when men afflict their brethren, they often do it either out of resolved malice, or in heat of revenge; but God cannot do it with such a spirit, nor from such principles; *The highest acts of revenge in God, are but the awards of Justice.* Again, Men will afflict others out of envie, or to ease themselves; as the Apostle speaks of parents chastning their children (*Heb. 12. 9, 10.*) *We have had fathers of our flesh, which have corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much more be in subjection to the father of spirits and live? For they verily for a few dayes chastned us after their owne pleasure, or* (as that

text may more clearly be rendred out of the original Greek)
as it seemed good to them, or as they thought good; As if he had
said,

said, They will doe it upon their naturall prerogative, or the right of paternity, without giving any account; Yea, a father will afflict and chasten his child sometimes (in another sence) for *his pleasure*; That is, to vent his passion, and ease himselfe: but God never chasteneth us in passion, nor ever purely upon prerogative, but with a respect also to our spirituall (which is the best) profit, and for *our good*. Now among the good things which God aymeth at in afflicting any man, this is not the least, the purging out of his evils. And therefore when we cannot ascribe the chastisement of man to man, but to God alone, 'tis a witness against him, at least, it drawes a suspition upon him of some great sinfulness lodged in him, or sinfull wayes walked in by him.

Thirdly, Observe.

It is no Concluding argument against any man that he is wicked, because God afflicts him immediately; or, how much soever the hand of God appears in an affliction, 'tis no concluding argument against the afflicted.

'Tis one principall scope intended by *Elihu* in this discourse, to shew that there were other causes & reasons of Gods afflicting *Job*, or any man else besides him. And that we should not make Conclusions, that the greatest sufferers, are the greatest sinners. For first, though indeed God threatneth to punish the wicked; who wilfully transgresse his Law, yet he afflicts many, without respect to wickednesse. Secondly, though God threatens the wicked only or chiefly at least, yet he reserves a liberty to try the innocent; yea, as *Job* saith in the 9th Chapter, *He laughs at the triall of the innocent*; And therefore the most innocent are most tryed. I have had occasion more then once to shew why they are most or so much tryed. First, for the exercise of their faith; Secondly, for the improvement of their patience; thirdly, to humble them; Fourthly, sometimes to set them up for examples to others; as the Apostle *James* speaks (Chap. 5. 10.) *Take my Brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience.* The Prophets have suffered affliction, and God hath let them suffer, that they might be patternes of suffering; and 'tis so in many other instances; Fifthly, God doth it to mortifie their corruptions; Sixthly, to prevent future transgressions, he hedgeth up their way.

way with thornes; Seventhly, to discover or gaine a testimony of their sincerity. They serve Christ to purpose, who can suffer while they serve, and bleed under his crosse, while they sweat under his yoke. Surely then, there is no concluding against any man that he is a son of *Behai*, or hath cast off the yoke of Christ, because Christ burdeneth him with his crosse. Yet this was the great *Maxime*, which *Jobs* friends insisted upon, *He must needs be a wicked man, because the Lord had thrust him downe, not man.*

But when we see good men thrust downe by the hand of God, there is a better use to be made of it, then to judge them, and that is to be watchfull over our selves, lest we put a rod into the hand of God to chasten us, or a sword into his hand to wound us. For as Christ spake (*Luke 23. 33.*) *If it be thus done to the greene tree, what shall be done to the dry?* If Christ suffered so much, who was a greene flourishing fruit-bearing tree, what may we who are dry and barren trees? Or take the meere sons of men, some of them comparatively to others, are as greene trees flourishing in grace and holinesse, who yet are under sore affliction; and if this be done to a greene tree, what shall be done to those who are but dry barren fruitless trees, yea, trees that bring forth evill fruit. The Apostle (*1 Pet. 4. 17.*) gives a suitable caution; *If Judgement begin at the house of God* (he does not say at the Temple of Idolls, But if it begin at the house of God) *what will the end be of those that obey not the Gospel!* Let others looke to it when they see God afflicting his people, when they see God bringing such troubles into his owne house, what troubles may they expect, who are indeed but a den of theeves, and whose houses are, yea who themselves are as a Cage of uncleane birds? Thus we see the great argument disproved, which *Jobs* friends used to prove him wicked, because *God did thrust him downe, not man.* And, saith *Elihu*, this is it you say and boast of, as your wisdom; but indeed you have not convinced *Job*; nor by this. What you have taken for a demonstration, is but a fallacy. And though I might wave mine owne trouble in shewing that it is so, because I am not the man (but ye are the men) to whom *Job* hath shaped his whole discourse, yet I cannot forbear to doe it, only I promise you, I will not tread in your steps, nor take up your method in doing it. That's the summe of the words which follow.

Vers.

Vers. 14. *Now he hath not directed his words against me, neither will I answer him with your speeches.*

In this verse *Elihu* speakes Negatively in two things; First, He tells us, that *Job* had not spoken professedly, nor directly to him. Secondly, he tells us, how he would not deale with *Job*; that is, not as his friends before had done.

Now he hath not directed his words against me.

As if *Elihu* had said, I confesse I have not been at all spoken to all this while, unlesse in common with all the Auditory, and therefore might well enough looke upon my selfe as unconcern'd in this matter.

The word here used *to direct*, hath a great elegancy in it, and may be an allusion; First, to an Archer who aymes at, or directs his arrow to the mark. Secondly, to a Warriour, especially a Commander in warre, who sets his men in battel array against the enemy; As if *Elihu* had said, *Job* hath not aymed at me, nor hath he ordered or set his words in order to oppresse me. *Job* hath not drawne up his forces, nor set himselfe in array against me, but against you; And so perhaps that hate and bitterness of spirit, which you have contracted by this long-continued debate with *Job*, hath given you occasion prudently to withdraw, and forbear the entertainment of any further discourse with him. Yea, possibly ye are now fallen into a deep contempt of him, as a man forsaken of God, and therefore to be no more dealt with by man. But there is not the like reason for me to forbear speaking with him; seeing as he hath not at all opposed me, so I am not at all disturb'd in my owne thoughts about him, nor is my spirit imbittered with any unidictive motions against him; and shall therefore enter the lists of this disputation, with a peaceable and quiet minde; or rather I shall (being a person every way unprejudic'd) doe my best endeavour to moderate and compose this great difference between you. Now he hath not directed his words against me, &c.

TV digestit
disposit, ordi-
navit, verbum
bellicum de acie
ordinanda dici-
tur. Merc:

Hence note.

First, Our words should be well ordered.

They should be drawne up like a wel disciplin'd Army, in ranke and file. Confusion in words is as bad as confusion in things; Some heape up words, but they doe not rightly dispose nor order them;

them; all they speake is out of joynt or frame. As a multitude or rout of men, doth not make an Army; we may see ten thousand men together, and yet no Army; why? because they are not in order or method, they are not under Discipline, and so they are but a confused throng, not an Host of men. And thus a great many words huddled and throng'd together, are of no more force nor use, then a number of men without order; Method is very good in every thing we doe, especially in what we speake; A speech rightly ordered, is like an Army rightly marshaled. A word fitly spoken, fitly as to the season of it, and fitly as to the joynting and disposing of it (we may take in both in that place of Solomon, *A word fitly spoken*) is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

Vult ostendere quod non loquitur quasi provocatim. Aquin:

There is another thing considerable in this former part of the verse, *Elihu* (as was lately intimated) spake thus to shew he came to the dispute unprovoked; *He hath not directed his words against me*; he hath not toucht me. Ye indeed have been provoked by his words, he hath toucht you often and often to the quicke, and this hath made you touchy, angry and passionate, and you have growne into heats; but because he hath not directed his speech against me, therefore I shall come upon the stage, and enter this dispute with much coolness and temper. In a word, I bring no passion against his person, as you (being stung by his words) have done.

Hence note, Secondly.

They who are not provoked, have no reason to speake provokingly.

That's it which *Elihu* would have *Job* perswaded of; we use to say, *Speake when you are spoken to*. Then surely we are not to speake otherwise, then we are spoken to; we must not give rayling for rayling, much lesse may we rayle when rayling is not given.

He hath not directed his words against me.

Superbi qua ad comunem omnium utilitatem dicuntur nunquam sibi dista existimant. Gregor:

One of the Ancients Commenting upon this text, saith; *Elihu* discovers pride in this speech, *He hath not directed his speech against me*; As if *Elihu* disdained to take notice of what was spoken to them; which (saith he) is the humor of a proud man; who looks not upon himselfe as engaged by any thing spoken, unless

unlesse you speak personally and directly to him ; whereas Christ speaking personally to his Disciples only, would yet have all men see themselves spoken to (*Mark 13. 34.*) *What I say to you, I say to all, watch.* *Elihu* should have taken what *Job* spake to his three friends, and spoken to all that were present, and so might well enough have spared this complement, as my Author conceives. But I passe that as a curiosity ; Especially because it appears plainly enough, that *Elihu*, though the words were not spoken directly to him , yet did take himselfe to be much concerned ; and therefore riseth up as a Moderator in this Controversie between *Job* and his three friends. *He hath not directed his words against me.*

Neither will I answer him with your speeches.

I will not goe your way, nor follow your example in this undertaking ; I shall proceed upon other principles, and use other medium's then ye have done ; such, I hope, as will be found much more effectuall, and attaine their end. We may take these words ;

I will not answer him with your speeches, two wayes ; First, as their speeches had too little light of reason in them ; Secondly, as their speeches had too much fire of passion in them. As if he had sayd, I will use milder words and stronger arguments ; I utterly disapprove the course you have taken with him ; and therefore I will neither insist upon your theme to condemne him for an hypocrite, nor use your argument to prove it, because God hath thus sorely afflicted him ; for I hold that a meere Sophisme. *I will not answer him with your speeches* ; That is, with speeches which have so much passion, and so little true reason in them, as to the poynt in hand. For though *Job's* friends had spoken many things of much weight and reason considered abstractly, or in *Theſis*, yet when it came to the *hypothesis*, as applicable to *Job's* speciall case, then their speeches had little or no weight in them. So that in this profession *Elihu* seemes to promise these two things.

First , That he would use stronger arguments then they had done ; I will not use yours, that is, weake ones, I purpose to come better prepared to the Combate then you ; For though *Elihu* doth somerimes use such arguments as they, yet he doth not use them to their end to prove that *Job* acted rebelliously, or like a

Mibi integrum est respondere & quidem longe, aliter & ex alio fundamento, licet me dixerit Jobus non oppugnaverit.
Scul: *Non sequitur vias vestras in respondendo, sed alias efficaciores inveniam.*
Aquiu:

wicked man againſt God, as they did : but to ſhew, that he carried himſelfe too highly, or over-confidently towards God. And this (as it appeares by the iſſue) tooke more upon *Job* then all his friends hard ſuſpicions, charges, and accuſations. This humbled him, this ſilenced him ; he had nothing to returne, but ſate downe convinced ; and therefore *Elihu* dealt with him in more ſtrength of reaſon and divine authority then they had done.

Secondly, When *Elihu* ſaith, *I will not answer him with your ſpeeches*, he ſeemes to engage that he would deale mildly with him, or without paſſion ; he would not uſe bitter words, but debate and argue the matter gently and meekly. For though *Elihu* gave *Job* many ſevere reproofes, yet alwayes in a more friendly manner, not to prove that he had done wickedly, but to convince him that he had ſpoken overboldly ; or that while he was ſo zealous to defend his own innocency, he ſometimes intrencht upon the ſoveraignty of God, in his eager and earneſt deſire of pleading his cauſe before him. And ſurely it was but need that *Job* ſhould have a man of a milder temper ſent in to ſpeake to him, elſe his ſpirit might have been quite over-whelm'd and ſunke. Nor was it without the ſpeciall hand of God, that after this poore afflicted ſoule had been ſo hardly uſed, and ſo grievouſly cenſured by thoſe rigid diſputants, he ſhould at laſt meete with a man more meeke and compaſſionate, in ſome meaſure, to mitigate and allay his ſorrow.

Fiſt, In that *Elihu* ſaith, *I will not answer him with your ſpeeches*.

Obſerve.

It is not good to imitate others in any thing they doe or ſpeake which is not good.

We muſt not either act or ſpeake by example, but by rule, or by example only ſo farre as it answers the rule. 'Tis dangerous treading in their ſteps who tread awry. When *Paul* found that *Peter* did not goe right, he was reſolved not only not to follow him, but to reprove him (*Gal. 2. 14.*) Thus ſaith *Elihu*, here I will not write after your Coppy, nor take up directions from what you have done, for I ſee you have gone and done amiſſe.

Againe, When *Elihu* ſaith, *I will not answer him with your ſpeeches*.

Note

Note Secondly.

What we speake should be our owne sence, not the sence of others, unlesse their sence, either of things or persons, be the same with ours.

Some pin their opinion upon the sleeves of others, and they will be just of the judgement of such a man ; what he saith , they will say. As some expect that every one should be of their Judgement, and say as they say ; they are *many Masters* (which the Apostle *James* forbids , *My Brethren, be not many Masters*, doe not take upon you to give the rule to all others, some are proud at this rate, they thinke themselves able to give the rule to all men) so not a few are so easie, that presently they will take up any thing as a rule from any Master ; whereas we should not be so apt to follow, but labour to have the Judgment or reason of things in our selves, rather then to take it up upon trust. When *Luther* was much troubled about the dealings of God in the world, to see how matters went, and was saying within himselfe, Surely it were better things were carried thus and thus ; while *Luther* (I say) was thus troubled, he thought he heard this word of reproofe from God ; *O Martin, Martin, I see thou art very Martine, May-wise, thou canst give rules, even to God himselfe, but I am not a God* *tine, tu valde easie to be led by men. I will not take thy Counsell, though I see thou hast an honest heart in what thou counselest. I have a way of my owne, and I will have my owne way, though the world, yea, though good men, and my owne faithfull servants are grieved and mourne at it.* *Sapi, sed ego non sum deus sequar.* Man would appoint to God himselfe, but God will not model matters by mans wisdom, nor in his way. Thus in the present case (I only allude) it is not good for us when we heare what others say , presently to receive it, or take the impression from them ; and so answer in their words , or vote their opinions, though they are wise and good men ; *Elihu* takes the liberty to dissent, as in his opinion , so in his Method of proceeding with *Job*, I will answer, but it shall not be with your speeches, I will take my owne course.

Thirdly, Note.

The sayings and mistakes of others, should be our warnings not to doe the like.

Elihu observed where they missed as to the matter in hand,

he observ'd also wherein they mist, as to the manner of proceeding; and he observed both well, and wisely to avoyd the like inconveniences; and thereupon professed, *I will not answer him with your speeches.*

Fourthly, Note.

We should answer to every poynt and person with reason and sweetnesse, not with passion and bitternesse.

There is no convincing others with wrath; *The wrath of man* (saith the Apostle) *works not the righteousness of God,* (James 1. 20.) That is, wrath will never bring about nor effect those righteous things, or ends, which God would have us ayme at. The wrath of man puts him quite out of the way of righteousness, both out of the way of right speaking, and of right acting. To shew much reason, and little passion, is our wisdom. So the Apostle gives the rule (2 Tim. 2. 26.) *The servant of the Lord must not strive;* he doth not meane it of bodily striving; As if he had said, he must not be a fighter. As when the Apostle saith (1 Tim. 3. 3.) *A Minister must not be a striker;* It can hardly be thought he should intend only, if at all, that Ministers should not be like grossly boysterous men, who are not so much as Civill in their behaviour; surely such are farre enough off from a fitness to be received into the Ministry; therefore some expound the Apostle to the poynt in hand, he must be no striker with his tongue in passion, anger, and wrath, no word-striker. There is great striking, yea, wounding with words. Though Ministers must strike and wound with the authority of God, yet not with their owne animosities. They must wound the consciences of sinners, with the Word and Spirit of God, but not with their own wrathfull spirits; such strikers they may not be, nor may the servant of the Lord strive thus, *but be gentle to all men, apt to teach,* yea, patient in teaching. It is a great exercise of patience to teach, with line upon line, precept upon precept; When we see little received or heeded, yet to insist upon it, this is patience; *In meeknesse instructing such as oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give repentance to the acknowledgement of the truth.* As the Apostle James exhorts (Chap. 1. 21.) *to receive the word with meeknesse;* that's a most necessary rule in hearing the word; for many times the hearer is in a passion, there is
such

such a storme in his bowels that he cannot heare to purpose, therefore if any would receive the ingrafted word, they must receive it with meeknesse. I say also the word should be given out or spoken in *meekness*, though not with coldnesse; I doe not say with coldnesse or with a slightnes of spirit, but with meeknesse. And the truth is, milde speaking or meeknesse of speech (as to the spirit and conscience of the hearer) is not only most comfortable, but most prevailing. Meeknesse should be shewed, even where there is the greatest zeale; and zeale then prevayles most, when there is most meeknesse in it. The Apostle Jude saith, *Of some have compassion, making a difference, others save with feare*; That is, save them by preaching that which may make them afraid, scare them out of their sins; but yet still this is to be done in a spirit of meeknesse. (*Gal. 6. 1.*) *If any one be over-taken in a fault* (what then? rayle on him, rage against him, and revile him, no, but saith the Apostle) *ye that are spirituall, restore such a one with the spirit of meeknesse; considering thy selfe, lest thou also be tempted.* Bones must be set (to that the word which we translate *restore* alludes) with a tender hand. Those three things which are required in a good Chirurgion, or Bone-setter, are as necessary in a reprovor, or in him that would reduce another from the error of his way. First, He must have an *Eagles eye*, to discerne where the fault or fayling is. Secondly, A *Lions heart*, to deale freely with the faulty, how great soever they are. Thirdly, A *Ladies hand*, to use them gently and tenderly. All which will more fully appeare, while

Lastly, From the example of *Elihu*, we collect and learne, that a good Moderator or composer of differences, must avoyd five things. First, slightnes of spirit and of speech: It is not good to speake lightly of little things, but it is a shame to speake lightly of great things. Weighty matters must be handled weightily, and we should put not a little finger, but our shoulders to them! Secondly, passionreness of spirit and of speech, must be avoyded. That which hinders reason, had need be shut out while we are reasoning. What a contradiction in the adjunct is it, to heare of an angry moderator? or to see a man set himselfe to compose differences between others with a discomposed spirit of his owne. Thirdly, partiality in speaking, or the favouring of a party must be layd aside; for as *Elihu* did not spare to tell

Jobs

Jobs friends their owne, so neither did he spare to tell *Job* his owne, he was not partiall on either side. What can be imagin'd more uncomely, then that he who stands between two should leane to any one? or that he who comes to be an umpire or a Judge, should make himselfe a party or an Advocate. Fourthly, he must avoyd timoroufnesse, and not be daunted with what man shall say or can doe against him, while he is doing his duty. *The feare of man is a snare* (saith *Solomon*) That man had not need be in a snare himselfe, whose business it is to bring others out of the snares of error, whether in opinion or in practise. Fifthly, he must beware of an easines to be drawne aside, either by the perswasions or applauses of men. A Judge between others must keepe his owne standing.

Thus farre concerning these two verses, wherein *Elihu* is still carrying on his Preface, to prepare *Job* to receive attentively what he had to say. In the next place, *Elihu* turning to the standers by, signifies to them in what condition he found *Jobs* friends.

JOB. Chap. 32. Vers. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

They were amazed, they answered no more, they left off speaking.

When I had waited, (for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more)

I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion.

For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me.

Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles.

I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer.

Elihu had spoken of his friends silence before, and here he returns to it againe, with a further addition and aggravation.

Vers. 15. *They were amazed, they answered no more, they left off speaking, &c.*

There are two opinions concerning the person who spake these words. First, Some referre them to the writer or penman of this Book, but I rather take them as the words of *Elihu* himselfe.

They were amazed.

The root signifies to be affected with a very passionate and strong feare, even such a feare as they are arrested with who flee or fall before their Enemies in battel. So the word is used (*Jer: 50. 26.*) *A sword is upon her mighty men, and they shall be dismayed.* Dismay or amazement, is the displacing, at least the disturbing of reason it selfe; *Elihu* shews how unable and unfit *Jobs* friends were to argue with him any further, seeing upon the matter, they had lost the use of their reason, and were as men crack-brain'd, or broken in their understanding. *They were amazed.*

They

They answered no more, they left off speaking, or

Speech was departed from them ; there is a two-fold Exposition of that speech (*they left off speaking*) Some understand it passively, like that (*Luke 12. 20.*) *This night shall thy soule be required, or taken from thee ;* thou shalt not freely deliver it up, but it shall be snatcht from thee ; So here, their speech was taken from them ; or by an unanswerable conviction, silence was imposed upon them. Mr Broughton renders, *They doe speake no more, speeches be departed from them.* How can they speake from whom speech is departed.

יקו
ab illis ablata
sunt verba.

We translate actively, *they left off speaking*, as implying a voluntary act, they gave a stop to themselves ; either they were not able, or it was not fit for them to say any more. The Hebrew is, *They removed speech from themselves*, and so became as silent as if they could not speake at all. They were as mute as fishes. The following verse being of the same sense, I shall open that before I give the observations from this.

Vers. 16. *When I had waited (for they spake not but stood still, and answered no more)*

Stare pro ta-
cere.

Job waited hoping they would speak somewhat worthy of themselves, worthy of that opinion and reputation which they had in the world for wisdom, but they deceived his expectation, He could not have nor heare a word more from them. This *Elihu* puts into a parenthesis (*for they spake not, but stood still, and answered no more*) He utteth many words to the same purpose, to shew that there was somewhat extraordinary in their silence ; *They spake not, their tongues stood still.* As speech is the image of the mind, and from the abundance of the heart, so it is by the motion of the tongue. If the tongue stand still, discourse is stayd. Their mouths were stoppt, as being either unable or ashamed to urge their accusations and arguments any further. *They stood still and answered no more.* It is said of those forward accusers of the woman taken in adultery (*John 8. 9.*) *That being convicted by their owne Conscience, they went away one by one ;* they shrunke away, having not a word to reply ; And so did *Jobs* friends, who while they stood still, carried it as men unwilling to be heard or seene any more upon the place. *They were amazed, &c.*

First,

First, Hence note.

Amazement unfits us for argument.

Where wondering begins, disputing ends. *They were amazed, they answered no more.*

Secondly, Note.

The same men are sometimes so changed, that they can scarcely be knowne to be the same men.

Eliphaz sayd (Chap: 4. 2.) *Who can withhold himselfe from speaking?* He was so forward that he could not be kept from words, but now he had not a word in his keeping, speech was withheld, or departed.

Thirdly, Note.

False grounds or positions, cannot be alwayes maintain'd.

God will supply both matter and forme, arguments and words, to confirme his owne truth; they who are in the right, shall not want reason to back it: but they who are in the wrong, may quickly find a stop, and have no more to say. The Apostles were weake, because unwilling in a bad cause (2 Cor: 13. 8.) *We can doe nothing against the truth, but for the truth;* and they who are willing to be against the truth, shall be weake and not able long to doe any thing against it (*They spake no more*) *As God gives a banner,* (that is, outward power) *to them that feare him, that it may be displayed, because of the truth* (Psal: 60. 4.) So he gives wisdom and understanding (that is, inward power) for the maintaining of the truth. *In thy majesty ride prosperously because of the truth* (Psal: 45. 4.) As Christ who is truth, and the giver forth of truth, so they who are undertakers for truth, shall ride and prosper. Truth may be borne downe by power, and out-fac'd by impudence, but it cannot be overcome. *Never feare to undertake a good Cause; and ever feare to undertake a bad one, for it will be slur'd at last.* Truth may be oppoted; but truth-defenders shall never be ashamed, nor want a tongue to speake for it. Christ (Mat: 10. 17.) warnes his Disciples what entertainment they were like to find in the world; *They shall deliver you up to Rulers, ye shall be brought before Governours and Kings for my sake;* But he will encourageth them; *Take no thought*

P what

what ye shall speak, or what ye shall answer. For some might say, What if we should be called in question for the truths of the Gospel? we are willing to burne for them (as that Martyr said) but we feare we cannot dispute for them. Well, saith Christ, *take no thought what you shall speak, for it shall be given you in the same houre.* God himselve by his Spirit will prompt you, he will whisper such things into your eares, as all your opposers shall not be able to gainesay. Indeed we see some men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the truth (as the Apostle gives their Character) who have courage enough to set forth lyes, and slander the truth, who straine their wits to the utmost, and (as the Prophet speakes, (*Jer: 9. 3.*) *bend their tongues like their bow for lyes.* But let them remember what the Apostle sayd of such as they (*2 Tim: 3. 8.*) *Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so doe these also resist the truth; but (v. 9.) they shall proceed no further, for their folly shall be made manifest to all men;* That is, shortly all shall see that these men have but playd the fooles: we may say of all those who hold wild raunting opinions, they shall proceed no further, though they act highly against the truth now, yet stay but a while, and they will have nothing to answer or returne, they will have emptied their quiver, and quite spent their powder, you shall heare no more of them.

From that 16th verse, where *Elihu* addeth, *I waited (for they spake not but stood still, and answered no more)*

Observe, First.

It is our wisdom and our duty to stay our time before we put ourselves out upon business.

It is good to wait; God himselve is not hasty upon us, he waits to be gracious, and we must wait our season to be serviceable; *Elihu* did not presently engage. The providences of God, and the Exigency of things, must put us on, we must not put ourselves on. Christ tells us (*Math: 9. 38.*) *The harvest is great, and the labourers few, pray therefore the Lord of the harvest that he would thrust forth labourers into his harvest;* he doth not say, *pray that labourers would thrust forth themselves into the harvest,* or run into it before they are sent, but pray the Lord of the harvest that he would thrust forth labourers; that is, that he would powerfully encline their hearts to the worke, whom he hath fitted

fitted and prepared for it. And as untill we are, at least, both competently prepared, and fairely enclined to that or any other good worke, 'tis best for us to waite; so when once we are prepared and enclined, 'tis best for us, without delay, to set upon the worke; *Elihu* did so, as appeares in the next verse.

Vers. 17. *I said also I will answer my part, I will shew my opinion.*

Now *Elihu* addresseth to his worke, his duty; and in this with the verses following to the end of the Chapter, we have, first, his resolvednesse to speak, *I said I will answer for my part, &c.* Secondly, his ability, readines and furniture to speake (v. 18.) *For I am full of matter, &c.* Thirdly, we have the motives that prest him to speak, or that he was exceedingly prest to it in the latter end of the 18th verse, as also v. 19, 20. *My spirit within me Constraineth me. Behold my belly is as wine which hath no vent, &c. I will speake that I may be refreshed.* Fourthly, in the two last verses, he tells us what caution, yea what conscience he meant to use in speaking (v. 20.) *Let me not I pray you accept any mans person: neither let me give flattering titles unto man, &c.*

I said I will answer for my part, &c.

Now you have done, I will begin; those words, *I said*, are not in the Hebrew text explicitly, yet are well understood. I will answer for my part, that is, (as some conceive, the force of the phrase) I will answer with my strength, and might, I will put my shoulders to it; but better Grammarians conclude, that the word imports, A mans share or portion in any worke to be done, rather than the strength which the workman useth or puts forth in doing it. And so the sence is plaine, as if *Elihu* had said, they have done their part, they have gone to the utmost of their line; now I see it falls to my turne to speak, and I will do what falls to my turne, *I will answer also for my part.*

I also will shew my opinion.

We had these words in the negative at the 6th verse; There *Elihu* sayd, *I was afraid and durst not shew you my opinion*; But here, as also before (v. 10.) *Elihu* had taken courage and was

Illud quod aliqui partem interpretantur pro mea virili parte aut pro viribus, latine potius dictum est, quam ad germanant vocis significationem. Pined:

resolved to *shew his opinion*. I shall not stay upon any opening of this clause, only I shall note two or three things briefly from it, as connected with the former verse. There we had *Elihu* waiting, here we have him purposing to speake.

Hence note.

They who consider and waite before they speake, speake most prevailingly, most weightily.

It was long ere *Elihu* ventured to speake, but when he did, he did it to purpose and with full effect. That which comes from our owne heart, is most like to take upon the hearts of others; they speake as much from their hearts as with their tongues, whom we see long waiting before we heare them speaking. And therefore, it is not good, no not for good speakers, to be speaking before they have been waiting; many through haſt bring forth untimely births, and unripe fruit; *Elihu* could say, *I have waited*, before he sayd, *I will answer for my part*.

Secondly, Note.

We ought to observe order in speaking, and act our proper part.

I will answer for my part (saith *Elihu*) or my turne is come to answer. The Apostle *Paul* gives this rule at large (1 Cor: 14. 28, 29, 30.) He would have no Interruption, no confusion in Church-meetings, or Church-speakings.

Thirdly, When he saith, *I will answer also for my part, I also will shew mine opinion*.

Note.

He that hath received a gift or talent, should make use of it, and not hide it.

It is good to be doing our part, and shewing our opinion where we may be usefull. Some love to act other mens parts rather then their owne, and to intrude into Provinces which are not theirs. But whatsoever our hand findes to doe (as *Solomon* speakes, Eccl: 9. 10.) that is, whatsoever is, as *Elihu* here calls it, our part, that we should doe *with all our might*. More was given about using our talent and shewing our opinion at the 10th verse of this Chapter, whether I referre the reader.

Fourthly, *Elihu* was here but an auditor, not a disputant, not

a party, he came in only upon the by; yet having received a word he utters it.

Hence note.

Every man should thinke himselfe Concern'd to speake for the truth, when 'tis wronged, and doe his best to right it.

Or we should take all occasions and seasons of doing good by our words as well as by our workes. As it is not good to out-run providence, so to neglect or foreflow it is not good.

Lastly, Observe.

What others sayle in, we should labour to supply in the cause of God, and for his truth.

It is a proverbiall speech among the Hebrewes; *Where there Ubi non est is not a man, there be thou a man*; That is, if we see any un-^{vir, in vir} able to carry on and goe thorow-ititch with the worke before ^{esto.} them, we should lend a hand to helpe and supply them; thus saith *Elihu*, *I will answer for my part, I also will shew mine opinion.* And it seemes (by that which follows) *Elihu* did so, not only to answer his duty, but to empty and ease his spirit. For

In the 18th, 19th, and 20th verses, he gives us that further account of his interposition about this controversie.

Vers. 18. *For I am full of matter.*

Yea I am under a mighty Constraint; there is a kinde of force upon me, *The Spirit within me Constraineth me.*

I am full of matter.

The Original is, *I am full of words*; yet of more then words, as appears in the following part of this Chapter; therefore we translate, *I am full of matter*; that is, I am full of such words as are materiall; words of truth, words of sobernesse: I am full of such words as will carry with them a Conviction home to thy Conscience O *Job*, & silence all thy complaints. Or as if *Elihu* had said to *Jobs* friends, Though ye have spent your store upon *Job*, yet I have store and plenty by me to spend upon him. Thus he reflects upon them as scanty and short in their undertaking; your Lamps have spent their oyle, you have emptied your vessels; so have not I, *I am full of matter.*

Cum ait se plenum, amicorum impiam notare videtur. Pined.

The

The Spirit within me Constraineth me.

פס in Hiphil
anxit, angustavit
preffit.

corruptor com-
burit. Sym.

The text is ; *My spirit in my belly Constraineth me.* Master Broughton renders, *My bellyes spirit doth press me* : The Seventy render, *The spirit of my belly destroyeth me.* A Greek translator saith, *My spirit within me sets me on fire, or, I am all in a flame.* The word which we render *Constraine*, signifies to press very sore (*Judges 14. 17.*) *And it came to passe the seventh day, that he told her, because she lay sore upon him, or constrained him.*

It may be questioned, whole spirit, or what spi it it was that Constrained *Elihu* ?

Some Expound it of the Spirit of God ; he dictates both words and matter to me. Master Calvin seemes to Comply with this Exposition ; *God hath printed such a marke in the doctrine of Elihu, that the heavenly Spirit is apparent in his mouth ; God (saith Elihu) hath put his Seale to what I have to say, therefore doe not receive it as the word of a mortall man, the Spirit of God Constraines me.* Paul useth a word in the Greeke of like significancy (*2 Cor. 5. 14.*) *The love of Christ Constraineth me, it presseth and overbeareth me ; I am not able to get out of the power of it.*

Again, Others understand it of his owne spirit, yet acted by the Spirit of God (*Prov. 29. 11.*) *A foole uttereth all his spirit ; we translate, all his minde ; the spirit pressing Elihu was his mind carried strongly or resolvedly bent upon this business.* The strong inclination or disposition of a mans mind to any thing good or bad, is in Scripture language called *his Spirit.* *The Spirit within me.* The Hebrew is,

Spiritus ven-
tris est πνευ-
μα & ala-
critis wgens
& existimulan-
s ad loquen-
dum. Coc:

The spirit of my belly ; Which forme of speech notes only that which is most inernall, or lyeth closest within us. *Solomon* saith of the words of wisdom (*Prov. 22. 18.*) *It is a pleasant thing if thou keep them within thee ;* The Original is, *in thy belly.* (*John 7. 38.*) *Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water ;* That is, out of his inward man ; there shall be a spirit in his spirit (for this Christ spake of the Spirit which should be given) and the same word is used of the wicked man (*Job 15. 35.*) *His belly (that is, his mind or understanding) prepareth deceit.* And *Solomon* (*Cant. 7. 2.*) speaking of the Church, saith, *Her belly is like an heap of wheat set about with lillies ;* That is, she

is big with holy thoughts and conceptions, as a woman great with child, ready to be delivered. A gracious heart is continually meditating and conceiving holy things, which it brings forth, and is as it were delivered of, upon any good occasion. *The spirit with- in me Constrainerh me.*

What *Elihu* had thus spoken in plaine termes by way of assertion in this verse, he illustrates by way of similitude or allusion in the next.

Vers. 19. *Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles.*

חמר חדש
vinum novum
vel mustum, cui
non est ademp-
tum obturacu-
lum ut exhalet.
Iun:

Elihu prosecutes the same thing in another way; and to shew how troublesome it was to refraine speaking any longer, his thoughts being not only too many, but too working to be enclosed in so narrow a roome as his owne breast, he compares them to wine, or to new wine, which will either find or make its way out.

The whole similitude is exceeding elegant, First, he compares his thoughts, or the matter he had in his mind to wine. Secondly, he compares his soule or spirit to bottles, his inward man was the vessel that held this wine. Thirdly, he compares his long silence to the stople or Corke of the bottle. Fourthly, he compares that trouble and grieve of mind which this forbearance to speake brought upon him, to the working which is in a bottle so stoppt, or having no vent. Fifthly, he compares his intended speaking to the opening of the bottle which gives it vent.

Behold, my belly is as wine; that is, the thoughts of my belly are as wine.

The Chaldee Paraphrase saith, *as new wine*; which is full of spirits, and being stoppt is ready to breake the bottle; which shews the mighty force which *Elihu's* thoughts had upon him, they would out, there was no stopping of them. Christ saith, (*Math. 9. 17.*) *No man putteth new wine into old bottles, but men put new wine into new bottles; why? because they are stronger, and so more fit to preserve the wine; My belly is as wine.*

It.

It is ready to burſt like new bottles.

Non pro utra
non alibi repe-
ritur, ſæpe pro
pythone; quod
qui hoc ariolâdi
genere uteren-
tur velut ex u-
tribus vocem
emitterent.
Unde a Grecis
εργασπινοδι
dicuntur.
Merc:

The word which we render *bottles*, is never uſed in Scripture elſewhere in this ſence, but it is often uſed to ſignifie Wizards, or ſuch as have familiar Spirits (*Iſa: 8. 19. Iſa: 29. 4.*) becauſe they who uſed thoſe helliſh arts by compact with the Devill, did ſpeak out of their belly, & ſo as it were, out of a bottle. Now, ſaith *Elihu*, *My belly is as new wine that hath no vent, and it is ready to burſt like new bottles*; even new bottles will break, unleſſe the new wine have ſome vent. And becauſe though new bottles be ſtronger then old to keepe in wine, yet the wine may be to ſtrong as to breake them, therefore *Elihu* here-by ſhewes that his deſire or neceſſity of ſpeaking was ſo urgent upon him, that though he ſhould ſtrengthen himſelfe, yea ſtrive with himſelfe as much as he could to reſtraine from ſpeaking, yet ſpeake he muſt.

I am full of matter, &c.

Obſerve, Firſt.

A man ſhould not ſpeak, eſpecially in weighty matters, till himſelfe be well ſtored with matter.

Secondly, Obſerve.

When ſome veſſells are drawne quite dry, and instruments ſpent and worne to the ſtumps, when they can neither doe nor ſay any more, then God fills up and furniſheth others for his purpoſe.

There was not a drop more to be ſqueez'd out of *Jobs* friends, but *Elihu* was a full bottle (*Mal: 2. 15.*) there is a reſidue of the Spirit; God hath more Spirit or ſpirituall abilities to diſpoſe of, and beſtow then he hath yet diſpoſed of to, or beſtowed upon any one or all the ſons of men.

Thirdly, Note.

God can furniſh Instruments with proper gifts for the worke which he Calls them to.

Here was a man Cut out on purpoſe for this worke, he was Clothed with a ſpirit of prudence and courage, as well as with a ſpirit of diſcerning. We have a wonderfull Example of this in

Luther,

Luther, who came forth against all the powers of the papacy. What a spirit had he? his was a spirit of might, his spirit Constrained him, his belly was like a bottle full of new wine, there was no stopping of it. Others would have been daunted and cowed downe with the tenth of that opposition which he met with, but he was bold as a *Lion*, who turneth not aside.

Againe, Why did *Elihu* come forth? why did his spirit constrain him? what made his belly like wine? Some charge him with pride and arrogancy of spirit, as if he did it out of vaine ostentation, to shew his parts and gifts, to set himselfe above those other Worthyes who had dealt and discoursed with *Job* before. But we have reason enough (considering what he spake, and what the issue of his speaking was) to determine, that he was moved with a zeale for God, and to doe good to *Job*, not with a spirit of pride, to shew his learning, wit or wisdom among men; and therefore we finde that when the whole matter was brought to an issue, and God himselfe came to deale with *Job* and his three friends, God commends *Job*, and reproves his three friends, but there is no reproofe upon *Elihu*. Now for as much as God himselfe doth not charge him, what hath man to doe to charge him? Not only charity but reason and judgement command us to thinke his designe honest, and his aymes sincere, while he professeth under so vehement an impulse or impression upon his spirit to engage and speake in this matter.

Hence note, Thirdly.

To see truth ill handled, should fill our spirits with much zeal for God.

That was it which drew *Elihu* to this engagement, he saw those men (though good men) had put a disguise upon the things and dealings of God; and if men disguise the truth, and maintaine error, if they deface the doctrines of faith and pure worship, with their owne phantasies and false glosses, it should kindle a holy fire and fervour of spirit in us, to assert and vindicate the truth. Our spirit within us (in all such cases) should Constrain us.

Fifthly: In that *Elihu* was so Constrained and pressed in spirit, as wine which hath no vent, or as a woman with Child ready to travell.

Note.

It is a paine not to speake when we have much to utter, and much minde to utter it.

When *El'ku* was full he had a Constraint upon him to vent his opinion. *David* saith (*Psal.* 39. 1, 2, 3.) *I held my peace, even from good words;* (he did not only forbear idle and evill discourse, but refrain'd from good) but it was a trouble to him not to speak, especially not to speak good words; therefore he adds, *My heart waxed hot within me.* *Jeremy* found it no easie worke to keepe in words; yea, he describes himselfe as much pained by not delivering his minde, as a woman is when not delivered in child-birth (*Jer.* 20. 9.) *Then said I, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name, but his word was in my heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.* There was wine, new wine in his belly, yea there was a fire within him; as we may be weary with speaking, so with not speaking, or forbearing to speake, (*Jer.* 4. 19.) *My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart, my heart maketh a noise in me, I cannot hold my peace.* Read him in the like trouble upon the same occasion (*Jer.* 6. 11.) *Eliphaz* (Chap: 4. 2.) was thus pressed, *Who can withhold himselfe from speaking?* 'Tis a great paine, to be mind-bound, or not to deliver our mind, when our mindes are full and we full of desire to deliver it.

Sixthly, When he saith, *I am Constrain'd, I am like a bottle ready to burst,* It teacheth us.

The Spirit of God doth so over-power some men, that they cannot containe.

The Pharisees and high Priests, thought to stop up the Apostles, those bottles full of the new wine of the mysteries of Christ, and therefore gave them Counsell, yea a command to speake no more in his name. At the 10th verse, they said of some in a common sence, *These men are full of new wine,* that is, they are drunken; but the truth was, they were full of the Spirit, full of Gospel-truths, and like bottles full of new wine they could not hold. And when the Pharisees and high Priests would have stopp'd up those bottles, and charged them that they should speak no more

more in the name of Jesus ; they answered , *whether it be meet to obey God or man judge ye ; for we cannot but speak the things that we have seene and heard* : you may cut out our tongues if ye will, take away the organs of speech ye may, but otherwise we cannot but speak. As it is said of Christ, they could not resist the Spirit by which he spake ; so they were not able to resist the Spirit by which the Apostles spake. Some have such Impulses from the Devill upon them , that they cannot but speak boldly as well as wickedly and blasphemously ; it is strange to see what some both old and new Impostors have done, their bellies have been like bottles full of new wine, they have even burst to vent their wicked opinions. Bernard discourting of such an Opinionist in his time, saith, *He hungers and thirsts for Auditors, into whose bosomes he might empty himselfe, and powre out all his sentiments, that he might appeare who and how great a man he was. He careth not to teach thee what thou knowest not, nor to be taught by thee what he doth not know ; but that himselfe may be knowne to know what he knoweth.* Now if there be such pressures upon the spirits of vaine men to be delivered of their false and ayery conceptions : How much more when a man hath strong impressions from the Spirit of God ('tis discernable by the matter that comes out of the bottle, whether it be the wine of *Sodome*, or of *Sion*) is he unable to containe himselfe ? Such a man must speake not only to instruct and refresh others, but (as it followeth in the next verse) to ease and refresh himselfe.

Esurit & sitit auditores quibus omne quod sentit effundat, quibus qualis & quantus sit innotescat. Non curat te docere vel a te doceri quod nescit, sed ut scire sciatur quod scit. Bernard:

Vers. 20. *I will speak that I may be refreshed.*

The Hebrew is, *That I may breath, or, I may have roome.* The word properly signifies, that which is enlarged or widened ; when a vessell is full, and you draw some of the liquor out of it, then there is room ; So saith *Elihu*, *I will speak, that I may be refreshed, or have roome.*

latum dilatatum, recreatum loquar & mihi latum erit. i.e. erit mihi dilatio recreationis. Merc: Per verba evaporata interiorum fervorem & ab anxietate desiderij rediescam.

I will open my lips, and answer.

To open the lips is a preparation to speaking ; Christ opened his mouth and spake ; speaking is begun with opening the mouth ; a man may open his lips for other ends then for speaking, and a dumbe man opens his lips who cannot speake, yet no man can

speake *Aquin:*

ſpeak without opening his lips : and why did *Elihu* open his lips ? it was to reſreſh himſelfe.

Hence note.

He that ſpeaks his minde, eaſeth his minde.

'Tis good to ſpeak to reſreſh our ſelves, but 'tis much better to ſpeak for the reſreſhing of others ; yea, we ſhould ſpeak (though to our own paine) that we may reſreſh others, and ſpeak away their paine (*Iſa. 50. 4.*) *Thou haſt given me the tongue of the learned, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to him that is weary ;* They are good words indeed which reſreſh both the ſpeaker, and the hearers. But the deſigne of ſpeaking is rather for the reſreſhing of hearers, then of the ſpeaker. How vainly then doe they ſpend their breath in ſpeaking, who ſpeak without any deſigne of good, or of reſreſhing, either to themſelves or others, who ſpeak only to be applauded and taken notice of, to be cryed up and commended for eloquent ſpeakers. Theſe are ſad deſignes of ſpeaking ; better be a ſtammerer, then ſuch an Orator, better be dumb and not able to ſpeake, then to ſpeak for ſuch ends, with greateſt ability. Unleſſe we ſpeak, that others may be informed, converted, comforted, edified, ſaved, ſome way or other bettered, we were as good hold our peace and ſay nothing. The holy Apoſtle profeſſed (*1 Cor. 14. 19.*) *I had rather ſpeak five words with my underſtanding, that I might teach others alſo, then ten thouſand words in an unknowne tongue.* To ſpeak ſtrange words in an unknowne tongue, may gaine us a name among men ; But neither are any ſoules gained, nor doth any ſoule gaine the worth of one farthing in ſpirituall knowledge by hearing thouſands and ten thouſands of words ſpoken in an unknowne tongue. We ſhould thinke all thoſe words even as loſt to us, by which we have not, at leaſt, intended the gaine and good of others. But ſuppoſe, while we ſincerely intend the good of others in ſpeaking, they get no good by what is ſpoken ; yet it ſhall not be without good to us : for as *Elihu* here hoped, ſo may we to be reſreſhed by it ; for *when a man hath diſcharged his duty to God and man, in ſpeaking his mind, it cannot but be a great eaſe to his minde.* *Elihu* had a great duty upon him, to moderate and ſet this buſineſſe right between *Job* and his friends, to take downe that height of ſpirit that was in *Job*, and to allay that ſharpneſſe
and

and bitterneſſe of ſpirit that was in his friends. When we have in ſincerity diſcharged our duty to all others, and done that which our Conſciences charge upon us, how doth it quiet and reſreſh our minds? and how many have been burdened and diſquieted in their ſpirits for neglecting this duty: They (I ſay) who neglecting to ſpeake when it was incumbent upon them to ſpeake, and the cauſe of God required it, have found it a burden upon them long after. When *Mordecai* had acquainted *Queene Eſter* with the ſad condition of the *Jewes*, (whole deſtruction *Haman* had plotted) and adviſed the meſſenger to charge her, that ſhe ſhould goe in unto the King to make ſupplication unto him, and to make request before him for her people (*Eſt.* 4. 8.) She returned him anſwer by the ſame meſſenger, that ſhe could not doe this without running the hazzard of her owne life (*v.* 10, 11.) yet *Mordecai* replied (*v.* 14.) *If thou Altogether holdſt thy peace* (let the danger be what it will) *at this time, then ſhall their enlargement and deliverance ariſe to the Jewes from another place, but thou and thy fathers houſe ſhall be deſtroyed : and who knows whether thou art come to the kingdome for ſuch a time as this ?* As if he had ſayd, It is thy duty to ſpeake for thy people at ſuch a time as this, and therefore if thou doeſt not breake through all difficulties to ſpeake, thy ſilence will coſt thee deare, probably thou wilt looſe thy owne life by it, or if not, then certainly thy conſcience will trouble and vex thee for it as long as thou liveſt. Many offend in ſpeaking, and we may in many caſes offend both God and man, yea our ſelves too (when we ſee our opportunities loſt) by neglecting to ſpeake.

JOB. Chap. 32. Vers. 21, 22.

Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person : neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

For I know not to give flattering titles : in so doing, my Maker would soon take me away.

IN these two verses *Elihu* concludes (in which he had continued long) the Preface to his following discourse and procedure with *Job* ; Here also he acquaints us in what manner he meant to proceed with him ; about which we may consider two things.

First , His resolvednesse or the settlednesse of his purpose what course to take. Secondly, the reasons which moved him to it. The former he expresseth negatively in the 21th verse , and that in two points.

First , *He would not accept any mans person.*

Secondly , *He would not give flattering titles unto man.*

These two negatives (as the negative precepts in the Law of God) are to be understood with their affirmatives. *I will not accept any mans person*, is, I will have and give an equall, or neither a more nor lesse (to the best of my understanding) then a due regard to every mans person. And, *I will not give flattering titles* ; that is, I purpose to speak plainly, I will not complement men, but doe my best to accomplish the matter. And as he assures us how he will proceed in this 21th verse, so

Secondly, He gives us the reasons of this his intended impartiall, plaine , and down-right proceeding in the 22^d. These reasons are two-fold.

First, He would not doe otherwise, because he could not with any content to himselfe. It was against the very graine of his spirit to doe otherwise ; his disposition lay a quite contrary way, he was a man of another genius or temper, a man of another mould and make, then to doe such low and unworthy things, as accepting the persons of, or giving flattering titles unto men. He is expresse in this (v. 22.) *I know not to give flattering titles.*

Second-

Secondly, He would not because he durst not give *flattering titles, nor accept the persons of men*. The danger and dammage he should incur by doing so, kept him from doing so, as well as his owne indisposition to it. He should lay himself open and obnoxious to the wrath of God by such seeking the favour of men; as appears in the close of the verse; *In so doing my Maker would soon take me away*.

Thus you have the parts and purpose of these words; I shall now give a more distinct explication and account of them.

Vers. 21. *Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person; or, let me not now.*

So that particle is rendred (*Job 5. 1.*) *Call now, if there be* adverbium seu particula obsecrandi, seu ad hortandi, ut fodes, amabo, latinè.
any that will answer thee; yet 'tis an Adverb of beseeching or intreating; and therefore we render wel, *Let me not, I pray you*; which rendring seemes to have in it these two things. As if *Eliphaz* had sayd,

First, Expect not that I should, nor believe that I will doe any such thing, as the accepting of persons, or the giving of flattering titles.

Secondly, Be not offended if I doe not, be not angry with me, if I deale plainly with you; pray give me leave to use my owne freedome and liberty when I am speaking; for I am resolved to doe it, and not to accept the persons of men, nor to give them flattering titles. The words may be rendred also in a direct negation, *Verily I will not accept any mans person*. But I shall keep to our reading.

Non accipiam; ut sit 78 pro 77 quæ enalage insolens non est. Drus:

Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person.

The Hebrew is, *Let me not lift up any mans person*; or (which the Apostle forbids) *Let me not have any mans person in admiration*; I will not over-reverence any man, nor give him a respect beyond himselfe. The word which we render *person*, is in Hebrew, *face*, *Let me not lift up the face of a man*, or wonder at any mans face, as the Septuagint often render this phrase. And it is usuall to put the face, or the countenance for the person, because the face declares the person and shews who the mans is; and it is elegantly expressed by the face, because accepting of persons, importeth a respect to others for their outside, or inconsideration

פני איש

on of some externall glory. *Let me not accept the face of any man, or person*, let him be who he will. The originall word *ish*, most properly signifieth an eminent, or honourable man, a learned or wise man. As if *Elihu* had sayd, I will not accept or lift up the face of a man, though he be (*ish*) a man never so much lifted up, and exalted above his brethren. To accept the person of a man, is not a fault in it selfe; for as our persons are accepted of God, so ought our persons to be accepted with one another; yea, it is a duty to accept the person of a man; that is, to give him favour, honour, and due respect. Not only civility and humanity, but religion it selfe calls us to give outward reverence to them who excell, and are superior, either to others or our selves. God himselfe is sayd to accept the persons of his people first, and then their sacrifices or services. And we ought to accept the persons of men according to their differences in place and power, especially according to those gifts and Graces, which shine in them. Therefore when *Elihu* saith, *Let me not, I pray you, accept any mans person*, his meaning is, let me not doe it in prejudice to the cause or truth that is before us. Then we are properly and strictly sayd to *accept persons*, when in any matter, businesse, or poynt of controversie, our eyes are so dazeld or blinded by external appearances, that we have respect rather to the person of the man, then to the matter, or the truth of the cause in hand. So then, this sin of accepting persons, is alwayes committed when we are more swayed by, or when there is more attributed to persons then to things, that is, when the mans worth is more looked to then the worth or merit of his cause; or further, when something in a person which hath no respect to the goodnes, or badnes of his cause, moves us to give him more or lesse then is meere, this is sinfully to accept or respect a person. Thus *Elihu* acquits himselfe from all those bonds and blinds which his respect to those worthy persons before him, might lay upon him. They were ancient and grave men, they were wise and good men, he had a great respect for them, he owed much reverence to them, considering their age and gravity, their degree and dignity; yet he owed a greater respect to God, and to the truth, then to their persons, and was thereupon resolved, (though he had many and great temptations to doe it,) *not to accept the persons of men.*

Hence

Hence note.

To accept persons in prejudice to the cause or truth before us, is a high offence both to God and good men.

'Tis so in a double notion ; First, in the act of it , because we doe that which in it selfe is not right, nor according to the mind of God. Secondly, in the issue, consequence or effects of it, because by respecting persons, we are endangered to many other sins. While *Solomon* only saith (*Prov: 28. 21.*) *To have respect of persons is not good* ; his meaning is, 'tis very evill, 'tis starke naught. And the reason which he gives of the evill of it, is not only because the act in it selfe is evill, but because the issue and consequence of it is worse ; For, (saith that Scripture) *for a piece of bread that man will transgresse* ; That is, he that respects persons, will turne aside from Justice, for his owne advantage, though it be very small, even for a piece of bread. The Prophet complaines of thole (*Amos 2. 6.*) *who sold the righteous for silver, and the poore for a paire of shoes.* They who have sold or given up themselves to this crooked Spirit of respecting persons, will not sticke to sell both the persons of the righteous, and the most righteous causes, not only (as the Prophet saith) for a paire of shoes, but (as we say) for a paire of shoe-buckles. *They will soone judge amisse of things, who have respect to persons, and they alwayes looke beside the cause, who looke too much upon the face* ; nothing should weigh with us in judgement, but truth or right, and that in a five-fold opposition.

First , Truth and right must weigh with us in opposition to relation. When a Brother, or a neere kinsman be in the cause, we must not decline, nor be biased from the truth, yea though it be on his side to whom we have no relation, but that of *man*.

Secondly , We must keep to the truth, and doe justice in opposition to friendship. Though he be my friend, my old friend, and my fathers friend, I must not respect him, if truth stand upon the other side, upon the side of the meerest stranger. It was anciently sayd, *Socrates is my friend, and Plato is my friend, but truth is more my friend, and therefore I will stick to that.*

Thirdly , We must hold to truth, in opposition to or notwithstanding the hatred of men ; suppose a man beares us ill will, yea in other things hath wronged us, yet if his present cause be

Amicus Socrates, Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas.

righteous, we must doe him right : We may not bring in our particular wrongs or quarrells upon any cause, but that about which the wrong or quarrel riseth. They shew the purest love to righteousness, who act righteously towards those that hate them, and will not wrong those who have attempted to oppress and ruine them. A true lover of Justice will do to others as himselfe would have others doe to him, yea though they have not done to him, as they would be done to.

Fourthly, We must stand to truth in opposition to riches and worldly aboundance ; riches usually find more friends and favourers, then righteousness doth. And 'tis usuall to favour the rich more then the righteous. How often is truth on the poore mans side over-ballanced by his adversaries purse. But O how poore are they in spiritualls and morals, who thus respect the persons of the rich !

Fifthly, We must judge for truth in opposition to worldly greatness and power ; and that in a two-fold consideration.

First, Though men have a power to reward, and preferre us, to doe great things for us, yet this should not draw us aside ; woe to those who respect the greatness of the person instead of the goodness of the cause: yet how many are there who care not how bad a great mans cause is, if he will but engage to do them good : yea some great men look upon themselves as much undervalued, if they be not favoured in their cause (how bad soever it be) because they are able to doe them good who favour it. *Balak* rooke it very ill at *Balaams* hands, when he seemed unmoved by his ability to advance and reward him. *Did not I earnestly send for thee, to call thee ? Wherefore camest thou not to me, am I not able indeed to promote thee to honour ?* (Numb: 22. 37.) And wilt not thou serve my interest, when I have such a power to advance thine ? Thus also *Saul* thought all must cleave to him, and forsake the cause of *David*, because he was great and could preferre them (1 Sam: 22. 7.) *Will the son of Jesse give every one of you fields, and vineyards, and make you all Captains of thousands, and Captains of hundreds ?* Hath he any great places to bestow ; and honours to give ? Why then doe ye seeme to adhere to him and his party. Hope of reward makes a great bias upon some mens spirits, and carrieth them quite off from truth.

There is a second consideration prevailing much with many
in:

in this matter ; for though they are unmoved by rewards, and will not bite at the bayte of selfe-advancement ; yet, say they, O he is a great man, and hath great power, he may do me a shrewd turne, he may vex me and undoe me, he may sit upon my skirts hereafter and ruine me. Thus where hope doth not, feare may carry a man from respect to right to the respect of persons. But know, That be a man never so great, and able to doe me a mischief, yet truth must be maintained and Justice be done, though we should be quite undone by appearing for it. It hath been sayd of old, *Let justice be done, though heaven fall* ; much more should it be done, though we for doing and abetting it fall to the earth. Moses gave that charge more then once (*Levit. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 16, 17.*) *Thou shalt not respect the person of the poore, nor honour the mighty, but in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.* Again, *Ye shall not respect persons in Judgement, but ye shall heare the small as well as the great, you shall not be afraid of the face of man, for the judgement is Gods* ; neither undue pity to the poore, nor carnal feare of the great (which two often doe) ought to put any check or stop to the execution of Justice. So in that excellent model of instructions which Jehoshaphat gave his Judges (*2 Chron: 19. 7.*) *Wherefore now let the feare of the Lord be upon you, take heed, and doe it ; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* As if he had said, Do not you respect persons, for God respects no persons ; he is no gift-taker, therefore be ye no gift-takers ; your duty is to give every one his due. That which is right to one man is right to another, either in the same, or in any paralel case ; That which is the rich mans right in his cause, is the right of the poore man in his cause ; yea it is as sinfull not to have a due respect to the rich man in his case, as not to have respect to the poore man in his. Then all sorts and degrees of men are judged righteously, when there is no regard had or notice taken in Judgement, of what sort or degree any man is. *Judges are called gods, and therefore should act like God without respect to men.*

Quod uni equum est, non debet alteri in eodem casu esse iniquum.

And as this is a truth in all those cases of judgement, where Magistrates sit in the place of God, so it is as true in all the private judgements and determinations of brethren concerning persons or things, which (by way of distinction from the former) is commonly called the putting or referring of a matter in dis-

rence to men. We must take heed in private judgements, that we be not swayed according to the condition of persons, nor must we make the fault great or lesse, the cause better or worse, because the person is greater or lesse, friend or stranger to us. The Apostle gives this counsel and caution to the Churches (*James 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.*) *My Brethren, have not the faith* (that is, the doctrine of faith or profession) *of our Lord Jesus, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons ; For if there come into your assembly a man with a gold ring, and there come in also a poore man in vile rayment, and you have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, sit thou here in a good place, and say to the poore, stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool : are ye not then partiall in your selves, and are become judges of evill thoughts.* In administering the things of God which are spirituall, we must observe no civill difference, no distinction among men. Christ hath given himselfe alike and equally to rich and poore, bond and free, and therefore, as to Church-priviledges and enjoyments, they must all be alike, and equall unto us. No man is to be knowne after the flesh in the things of the Spirit (*2 Cor: 5. 16.*) that is, no man is to be valued meerely, upon natural or worldly accounts ; if we doe, then (as the Apostle *James* concludes in the place last before mentioned) *are we not partiall in our selves ?* that is (as some also translate that reproving question) *Have we not made a difference,* a groundlesse difference, or a difference grounded upon carnal respects, rather then upon any solid reason ; and so as it follows in the close of the verse, *are become judges of evill thoughts,* that is, have made our judgement of those persons, according to the dictate of our owne evill and corrupt thoughts, not according to the rule of the word.

Further, this sin of respecting persons, is found also in the ordinary converse of men ; For when we cast favours upon those that are ill deserving, and commend those (as we say) to the skies, who should rather fall under our severest censure, and are led to doe all this also, because the person is a kinsman or a friend ; for though (*ceteris paribus*, other qualifications and circumstances being equall) we are to respect friends and kindred, who are our owne flesh, before strangers, yet vertue and worth should out-weigh relations, and (as *Levi* in doing Justice, *Deut: 33. 9.*) so we in bestowing rewards, should not acknowledge our

Bre-

*Brethren, nor know our owne children ; but let such have our re-
wards who best deserve them.*

I may adde this also, To take up this or that forme of religion,
because such and such persons are in it, and to reject another,
though better, because none but a few that are despised and con-
temned are in it, is a most dangerous way of respecting persons.
This was the meaning of that question (*John 7. 48.*) *Have any
of the rulers, or of the Pharisees, believed on him ?* As if certainly
that must alwayes be the best way and rule of believing, which is
professed by the rulers ? Or as if it were ground enough to reject
a way of religion because the common people or the poore are
mostly found in it. Thus, 'tis storied of a Great Prince that was
converted to the Christian faith, and resolved to be baptized, that
seeing a great many poore men in his way as he went, he asked
to whom they belonged ; it was answered they were Christians,
and of that religion which he was entring into ; what, doth Christ
keep his servants so poore ? (sayd he) I will not serve such a Ma-
ster, and so drew backe, even while he was but setting his face to-
wards Christ. I might instance the sinfullness of accepting per-
sons in many other particular cases, as well as these, but these
may suffice for a tast. *Let me not (saith Elihu) accept any mans
person,*

Neither let me give flattering titles unto man.

In the former part of the verse it was *Ish*, here it is *Adam* ; *Gr æciverteum*
I will not respect the person of the greatest men, nor will I flat- *ΓΙΓ cognomi-*
ter any earthly, any mortall man. Mr Broughton renders, *That I* *nandi per es-*
respect an earthly man. The vulgar latine translates the whole *τρεπεζειν* *re-*
verse thus ; *I will not accept any mans persons, and I will not e-* *vereri, et dæu-*
quall God to man ; As if he had sayd, *I will not measure God by* *μαου πρὸς ω-*
man, in his dealings and proceedings with man ; As my purpose is to *π. 1, mirari per-*
speake truth, and spare no man, so I will not wrong God by drawing *sona in reddi-*
him downe to the rules of men. What is man that he should compare *derunt. Merc:*
with God ? But, though this be a truth, yet because it departs so *Et deum homini*
farre from the Original text, I will not stay upon it. Our read- *non aquabo.*
ing is cleare. *Vulg:*

I will not give flattering titles.

There are severall other readings of these words, which I shall
propose

And hominem propose and paffe to our owne. First, *I will not use a preface*; or, *I will not stand prefacing with man*. Flatteries are usually set forth in affected Prefaces and Apologies. Secondly, *Let me not change names before men*; or, *let me not speak to man under a borrowed name*; That is, let me speake plainly and clearly without ambages and fetches; let me speake to every man, and about every thing by its owne name, and not with covered words, as if I were unwilling to touch those to whom I speake. Our translation is yet more cleare to the scope and tendency of this place; *I will not give flattering titles*.

tiam ejus testu
 verbis utar oc-
 culte eum de-
 signans. Et no-
 men proprium
 immutans. Ver-
 bum כנה sig-
 nificat aliquem
 occulte desig-
 nare. Merc: כנה
 כנה est muta-
 re verum nomi-
 nibus agere, ut
 non possis nisi
 obscure quid
 semiatu intelligi.
 Cujus contrarium est
 aperire os, et exa-
 eny exa eny
 appellare. Coc:

This sentence is but two words in the Hebrew; The verbe signifies (say the Rabbins) to *hide*, or *conceale*, or to carry a matter closely and obscurely; and they give the reason of it, because in flattering there is a hiding of what men are, and a shewing of what they are not. The word signifieth also to give a *nick name* or a *by-name*, and so the sence is; I will not give secret reflections, nor gird at any man upon the by; *Jobs* friends had done so sometimes, though they after spake explicitly and directly enough. Further, the word signifies the giving of *any additionall title*. Thus I finde it used in the Prophet (*Isa. 44. 5.*) *One shall say, I am the Lords:* (speaking how persons shall flow into the Church) *and another shall call himselfe by the name of Jacob: and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himselfe by the name of Israel: He shall surname himselfe;* that's the word here used, he shall take up that title, that illustrious title, he shall list or enroll himselfe among the people of God, and thinke it his honour and glory to *surname himselfe by the name of Israel*. The word is so used againe (*Isa. 45. 4.*) *For Jacob my servants sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not knowne me.* It is spoken of *Cyrus*, I have given thee a glorious title; God did not only name *Cyrus*, but gave him a surname, he called him, *Cyrus my servant, and Cyrus mine anoynted*. Thus the word signifies to give a title, or a surname; now there are surnames or titles of two sorts; First, disgracefull and reviling ones, justly given to, but commonly by vile men. Secondly, Honorable and advancing ones. And these are of two sorts.

First, Such as are true and well deserved, many by the great
acts which they have done, have purchased surnames; *Alexander*
King

King

King of Greece, for his Warlike valour and ſuccelles, was called *The Great* ; And among The Romans *Scipio* after his victories over the *Carthaginians* in *Africa*, was ſirnamed *Africannus*. The Romane Hiſtories ſupply ſundry examples of this kind. And when in Scripture *Paul* is called an *Apoſtle*, *Peter* an *Apoſtle*, They well deſerved theſe honorable Titles, becauſe as they were meere- ly of Grace immediately called and ſent of God, to publiſh and plant the Goſpel all the world over, ſo they laboured aboun- dantly in it, and by their miniſtery ſubdued and conquered the world to the faith and obedience of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.

Secondly, There are alſo titles and ſirnames, which are meere pieces of flattery, there being no worth in the perſon that may juſtly deſerve them. 'Tis not ſinfull to give titles, but as we tran- ſlate *to give flattering titles unto men*. We ſhould call men as they are, and as they deſerve ; *I will call a ſpade a ſpade*, (ſaith *Elihu*) he that is good I will call him good, and he that is bad I will call him bad ; and that which is ill done I will ſay it is ill done ; *Let me not give flattering titles unto men*.

Hence obſerve.

Flattery is iniquity : to give flattering titles unto men is to tranſgreſſe the Law of God.

Some will not give true and due Titles to any man ; The moſt truly honorable perſons and higheſt Magiſtrates, ſhall have no- thing from them but *Thou* and *Thee*. *Jacob* a holy and a plaine man, yet called his owne brother, *My Lord Eſau*, (*Gen. 32. 4.* *Gen. 33. 8.*) *Luke* The Evangelift called *Theophilus*, *Moſt ex- cellent* (*Luke 1. 3.*) And *Paul* ſtilled *Feſtus*, *Moſt Noble* (*Acts 26. 25.*) Now as they erre upon one extreame, who will not give true titles, ſo doe they on the other, who give (which *Elihu* here diſclaimes) flattering titles. There is a two-fold flattery.

Fiſt, In promiſes.

Secondly, In praifes.

Some are full of flattery in promiſes, they will tell you of great matters which they will doe for you, yet meane no ſuch thing. Thus (*Pſal. 78. 36.*) The children of *Iſrael* dealt with God, when in the time of their ſtraights and calamities they promiſed to doe great and good things, they would turne to the Lord and ſerve him ; *Nevertheſſe* (ſaith the text) *they did flatter him* with

with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues; for their heart was not right with him, &c. Thus many upon their sick-beds, or in a day of trouble, what promises will they make? How deeply will they engage for duty, if God will restore them? how holy and zealous and upright will they be? they will leave their former ill courses, and yet all is but flattery, they really intend it not. 'Tis flattery in promises to God, when there is not a purpose in the heart to doe what we say, but only to get our ends upon him; And we deale no better many times by one another; men in streights will promise any thing, and when they have gained enlargement, performe nothing.

Secondly, There is a flattery in praises, and that's here professed against. This flattery in praising hath a double respect.

Multi sunt qui vitia virtutibus vicinis honestare contentuntur & vitium omne palliant adumbrata nomenclatura e vicino subiecte virtuti. Basil: in Psal: 61.

First, To the actions of men. 'Tis flattery to call that act good that is nought, that just that is unrighteous; To put titles of vertue upon those things that are vicious, to call that which is indeed a covetous act, a thrifty one, and to call that act which is cruell, just, at most but strict or severe, this is to flatter men in what they doe.

Secondly, There is a flattery of persons, as to what they have and are, when we speake more of them then is in them, when we speake highly of them, who are low in all abilities and attainments. How grossely doe they give flattering titles, who blow up very Ideots with a conceit of their learning, who extoll fooles for wisdom, and commend the wicked as vertuous, yea recommend them as patternes of vertue.

We should give honour to all men to whom it belongs; but we are not to flatter any man, for that belongs to no man. (Rom: 13. 7.) *Render therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custome to whom custome, feare to whom feare, honour to whom honour.* There is an honour that belongs to men with respect to their degrees, when none belongs to them with respect to their qualities. He that is very honorable as to his place, may not deserve any honour as to his worth, yet he must be honoured as much as his place comes to. And as there is an honour due to those that are above us, so there is an honour due to those that are our equals, yea to those that are our inferiours, and below us. The Apostle gives that direction more then once; we have it first (Rom: 12. 10.) *Be kindly affectionate one to another, in ho-*

now preferring one another. The people of God should be so farre from an ambitious affectation of preheminance above others, that they should freely and really (not as many doe complementally) give others the preheminance, and offer them the upper place or hand; The grace of humility, doth not only forbid us to exalt our selves above our betters, but it also (in many cases) bids us set our selves below those whose betters we are. One of the Ancients hath made three degrees of this kind of humilicy. The first is, when we make our selves inferior to our equals; The second, when we make our selves but equal to our inferiors; The third, when we make our selves inferior even to our inferiors, and lesse then those who are lesse then we. Of this third sort of humility, the Apostle speakes againe in that serious admonition to the Church (*Phil: 2. 3.*) *Let nothing be done through strife, or vaine glory, but in lowlinesse of minde; Let each esteeme other better then himselfe.* As it is good to judge (according to truth) the worst of our selves, and the best of others, so it is good to have a better opinion of others then of our selves.

So then, the poynt lyeth not against giving honour to any man, or to men of all sorts, but only against the giving of undue honour to any. Of that the Apostle speakes (*Gal: 1. 10.*) *If I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ;* that is, if I should please men by flattery, smoothing them up in their sins or errors, I could not be the servant of Christ. They that were the strick observers of Christ, could not but observe this in him, that though he came to save man, yet he was farre enough from pleasing, that is, humoring any man. (*Luke 20. 21.*) *And they asked him, saying, Master, we know that thou sayest and teachest rightly, neither acceptest thou the person of any, but teachest the way of God truly.*

Yet caution is to be used here. For some goe so farre to the other hand, that while they thinke they ought not to flatter or please, they care not how they slight or disrespect the persons of men; and in stead of forbearing (as they ought) to give undue titles, they will not (as was toucht before) give so much as those that are due; that's a sin in defect, as the other is in excessse. And they sin much more who while they refuse to give flattering titles, are free to give reviling titles. There are these two great tongue-evills among men; Some give flattering titles,

others give reviling titles, detracting, calumniating, and biting titles ; it is as dangerous not to forbear the one, as to be free and forward in giving the other, and therefore we should take heed of both these extreames, that our speech may have an equall respect to truth, both while we praise, and while we reprove.

Vers. 22. *For I know not how to give flattering titles.*

Nescio cognominare; i. e. Blandiri. Bez:

It seemes to have little vertue in it, or matter of commendation, not to give flattering titles, when we are not able, or know not how to give them; To heare one that is (as we speak) a meere Countryman, or a clowne say, I will not give flattering titles, speakes not his praise at all, because 'tis supposed he at most can but speake sence, or true English ; but to heare a learned man, or some Great Courtier say, I will not give flattering titles, this is something, this shewes that his honesty masters his ability, and that his conscience is too strong for his parts. How is it then that *Elihu* saith, *I know not to give flattering titles* ? Had not *Elihu* wit and skill, words and language at command to give them ? Was he so courselly bred that he could not reach them ?

• I answer, Those words, *I know not*, may have a three-fold interpretation.

First, *I know not*, is, I have not made that piece of knowledge my study, I have not set my selfe to learne the art of flattery, nor to gaine the skill of carnal Courtship. Thus *I know not* to doe it, is, I have not set my selfe to doe it, I have not made it my businesse, or my ayme to doe it ; *A good man hath*, or at least desireth no skill in that which is evill, or not his duty ; how much soever any man knows to flatter, yet we may say he knows not to flatter who abhorreth flattery ; And can say (as the Apostle speaks, *Ephes: 4. 20.*) *He hath not so learned Christ* ; that is, he hath heard no such lessons, nor received any such instruction in the schoole of Christ.

Thus *Elihu* saith, *I know not to give flattering titles*. And doubtlesse, 'tis best being an Ideot, or a bungler at the doing of that which is not good, or (as the Apostle saith, some are to every good work) to be reprobate to every evill work, and word. How knowing are they, who can say in truth, they know not how to lie, or flatter, &c. I dare not say (with the Papists) that ig-

norance

norance is, but I am sure this nescience is not only the mother of devotion, but a great poynt of devotion it selfe. And, in this sence every godly man, and only a godly man knoweth not how to doe evill.

For as the wicked may have the Theory of good workes, and know what it is to pray, what it is to heare the word of God, yet they have no skill, they are not studied, nor fitted for the practise of those workes; So a godly man may know in speculation what it is to doe wickedly, and how to doe it as well as the most wicked man in the world, yet he is not at all disposed nor ready for the practise of any wickednesses. As nature makes us reprobate to good, so grace to evill workes. The Prophet saith of a bad sort of men, (*Jer: 4. 22.*) *They are wise to doe evill, but to doe good they have no knowledge.* Were they an ignorant people? No, the meaning is, they had not set themselves to learne the doing of that good which they knew; theirs were not sins of ignorance, but of wilfulnesse, and perversnesse. So on the other hand, 'tis the commendation of the people of God, *They are wise to doe good, but to doe evill they have no knowledge. I know not to give flattering titles.*

Secondly, As to know a thing or person, imports the allowance and approbation of it. (*Psal: 1. 6.*) *The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous;* that is, he approveth it. (*Psal: 101. 4.*) *I will not know a wicked person;* that is, I like him not, I regard him not, I will never give him testimony, he shall neither have my hand, nor my heart. So, not to know a thing or person, notes our disallowance and distast of either; in this sence Christ will say to those great knowing professors (*Luke 13. 27.*) *I tell you, I know you not whence you are, depart from me, &c.* Thus, here when *Elihu* professeth, *I know not to give flattering titles;* his meaning is, I like not, yea, I cannot abide to doe it. I may be as much skilled as any man to speake high words, possibly I could Court it as well as others, but I have no heart to doe it, yea it is the abhorrence of my soule to doe it. *A good man doth not approve the doing of evill, and therefore though he know well enough how to doe evill, yet he is truly sayd not to know how to doe it.*

Thirdly, *Not to know a thing,* is not to be accustomed, or practised in it. Thus when *Elihu* saith, *I know not to give flattering titles;* he seemes to say, *It is not my manner, I have not been*

used to flatter. As use doth not only make fitnesse, but encreaseth our knowledge, so disuse doth at once unfit us to doe a thing, and diminisheth our knowledge how to doe it. And therefore what we use not to doe, we are rightly sayd not to know to doe. *I know not to give flattering titles.*

Hence note.

The spirit of a good man is set against all that is evill, he cannot close nor comply with it.

His understanding assenteth not to it, his will chuseth it not, his conscience cannot swallow it, though not a camel, but a gnat, the least of sin-evils, much lesse doth he give himselfe up to the free and customary practise of great sins. A good man may well be sayd, not to know to sin, because though he knoweth the nature of all sins, yet he knowingly declines the doing of every sin. *I know not to give flattering titles,*

In so doing my Maker would soone take me away.

Those words, *in so doing*, are not expressed in the Originall, but supplied to make up the sence ; and yet we may very well read the text without them ; *I know not to give flattering titles, my Maker would soone take me away*, or as Mr Broughton renders, *my Maker would be my taker away.*

My Maker.

Elihu expresseth God, by the work of creation, or by his relation to God as a creator ; *Elihu* doth but include himselfe in the number of those whom God hath made, he doth not exclude others from being made by God, as much as himselfe, while he saith, *My Maker.* God is the maker of every man, and is so in a three-fold consideration.

First, He is the maker of every man, in his naturall constitution, as he is a man, consisting of a reasonable soule and body. *I am fearefully and wonderfully made*, sayd David, with respect to both, (*Psal: 119. 14.*)

Secondly, God is every mans maker, in his civill state, as well as in his naturall ; he formeth us up into such and such a condition, as rich, or as poore, as high, or as low, as Governours or as governed, according to the pleasure of his owne will. (*Prov. 22. 2.*)

The

The rich and the poore meete together; the Lord is the maker of them both; he meaneth it not only, if at all in that place, that the Lord hath made them both as men, but he hath made the one a rich man, and the other a poore man. Thus the Lord is the maker of them both. And as the Lord makes men rich, so Great and honorable. (Psal: 75. 6.) Promotion cometh not from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South; It cometh from none of these parts or points of earth or heaven, it cometh from nothing under heaven, but from the God of heaven; God is the Judge, he putteth downe one, and setteth up another.

Thirdly, The Lord is the maker of every man in his spirituall state, as good, and holy, and gracious. (Ephes. 2. 10.) *We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works; till we are wrought by God, we can doe none of Gods worke, nor have we any mind to doe it. Now when Elihu saith, My Maker would soone take me away, we may understand it in all these three senses; he that made me this body and soule, when I came into the world, he that ordered my way and state all this while that I have been in this world, he that formed me up into a new life, the life of Grace, and hath made me a new man in this and for another world. This my Maker would soone take me away.*

Hence note.

It is good to remember God as our maker.

Man would not make such ill worke in the world, if he remembred God his maker, or that himselfe is the work of God. We should remember God our maker; First, as to our being, as from him we receive life and breath. Secondly, as to our well-being, as from him we receive all good things, both for this life and a better. (Ecclesi: 12. 1.) *Remember now thy creator (not only that God is a creator, but thy creator, remember this) in the dayes of thy youth; And surely if thou remembrest him well, thou wilt not forget thy selfe so much as to forget the duty which thou owest him. Thinke often upon thy maker, and then this thought will be upon thee alwayes, If I owe my selfe wholly unto God for making me in nature, how much more doe I owe my selfe unto God, for making me a new creature. We ought to live wholly to him from whom we have received our lives. He that hath made us should have the use of us. He hath made all things for himselfe,*

selfe, (*Prov. 16. 4.*) chiefly man, who is the chiefe of all vices which he hath made. Those two memento's, That we are made by the power of God, and that the price by which we are redeemed is the blood of God, should constrain us at all times and in all things to be at the call and command of God. *My Maker*

Would soone take me away.

In voce יִקַּח *tolleret me, al-* We had the same word in the former verse, there 'tis used for accepting a person; here for taking away a person. The Learned Hebricians take notice of an elegant flower of Rhetorick in this expression; *If I take persons, God will take away my person*; so we may translate the Text; *If I take men, my God will take me away.* Yea, my maker would not only take me away at last, or (as we say) *first or last*, but he would make dispatch, and be quicke with me, *My maker would*

Soone take me away.

כְּמִטְעָה

Some render, *He would take me away as a little thing*; But the mind of our translation is, he would take me away in a little time. The originall word beares either signification, and so may the scope of the text; My Maker would take me away as a little thing, he would blow me away as a feather, or as dust, and crush me as a moth; and he would doe it in a moment, in a little time; all the men of the world, yea the whole world is but a little thing before God, and he can quickly take both away. (*Isa. 40. 15.*) *Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the Ballance; Behold, he taketh up the Islands as a very little thing.* Now if Whole Islands, if all nations are such little things as drops and dusts, then, what is any one particular man, how big soever he be? And how soone can God take him away! Little things are taken away in a little time. So the word is used in the second Psalm (*v. 12.*) *If his wrath be kindled but a little, or but, as a little thing*; if the wrath of Christ be kindled only so farre that you see but a sparke of it, *blessed are they that trust in him*; There is no standing before the least wrath of the great God, by the greatest of the sons of men.

We translate, *He would soone take me away*, or he would doe it in a little time, my ruine needs not be long in working, he would

would rid his hands of me presently ; to take or snatch a man away, notes three things.

First, A violent death, or a violence in death.

Secondly, A speedy or sudden death, a quick dispatch. When the fire was kindled and the word sent out against *Korah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, their maker soone took them away ; he bid the earth open, and it tooke them away in the twinckling of an eye ; they went downe quick into hell. It is sayd of a wicked man in this booke (*Chap. 27. 21.*) *The East wind carrieth him away* ; there also this word is used, that is, judgement like some fierce impetuous winde, shall blow him from his standing, and blast all his glory.

Some give the sence by the effect of fire, *My Maker would soone burne or consume me.* The word in the Hebrew signifieth to *burne*, as well as to take away, and we know the burning of a thing is the taking of it quite away ; fire makes cleane riddance. And againe Fire or flame riseth up (as a thing that is taken up) into the aire, and that which is burned in the fire may be sayd to be taken up with it. Thus also 'tis translated (*2 Sam: 5. 20,*) *David came unto Baal-perazim, and David smote them there, &c. and there they left their Images, and David and his men burnt them* ; we put in the margin, *and David and his men tooke them away* ; which is the translation here in *Job*. Either of the readings is cleare and full to the purpose ; God hath fire, he hath hell-fire unquenchable for sinners, their maker can quickly consume and burne them up. (*Isa: 27. 4.*) *Who would set the briars and thorns in battell against me, I would passe through them and burne them up together.* How quickly can the Lord burne wicked men, who like briars and thorns scratch and reare the innocent ? wicked men can no more stand before the wrath of God, then briars and thorns can stand before a flaming fire. That's a good reading ; ours comes to the same sence, *my Maker would soone take me away.*

*Sunt qui tolle-
ret me, excep-
tant, combu-
ret me, ut a-
liquando sumi-
tur hoc verbum
in sublimi tolli-
tur. Merc:*

Hence observe.

First, *As flattery and accepting of persons are great, so they are very dangerous sins, they are wrath-provoking sins.*

If we flatter men, God will not flatter us, he will deale plainly with us. To receive flattery, or to suffer our selves to be flattered,

tered, is very dangerous, as we ſee in the example of *Herod* (*Acts* 12. 22, 23.) who having made a very eloquent Oration, *The people gave a ſhout, ſaying, it is the voice of a God, and not of a man*; They gave him flattering titles, or (as ſome render the former part of this verſe) they wonder'd at his perſon. But what was the iſſue of it? Preſently (ſaith the text) *the Angel of the Lord ſmote him, becauſe he gave not God the glory, and he was eaten up with wormes, and gave up the ghoſt*. Thus his Maker tooke him ſoone away, for taking that glory to himſelfe. O take heed of entertaining flatteries when given, we ſhould put them back from us, as we would a poiſonous cup. High commendations of Sermons given to the Preacher, may have a ſad conſequence. *When men give much glory to men, 'tis hard for men to give the glory back againe to God*. *Herod* was ſo pleaſed and tickled with the glory which the people gave him, that he could not part with it, and ſo loſt himſelfe. Becauſe he forgot that he was a worme, he was deſtroyed by wormes. The tranſlation given us by the Septuagint of this text in *Job*, complies fully with that dreadfull example in the *Acts*; *I know not how to give flattering titles, for in ſo doing the wormes or moths will eate me up*. The words of *Elihu* thus rendered in *Job* are a threatening aſſertion, That the wormes ſhall eate thoſe that give flatteries; and the judgement which fell upon *Herod*, is an example threatening all thoſe that receive flattering titles, with that dreadfull doome of *being eaten up by wormes*. And doubtleſſe, if not that, yet either ſome other corporal and viſible judgement, or (which is much worſe) ſome ſpiritually and inviſible judgement, will overtake thoſe who love either to flatter others, or to be flattered themſelves. And as that example ſhewes how dangerous it is to receive flatteries; ſo to give flatteries, hath in it a double danger.

First, It is dangerous to others. When Paraſites flatter Princes, when Miniſters flatter the people, how doth it enſnare their ſoules? 'Tis hell and death to flatter ſinners, and not to deale plainly with them; to give lenitives inſtead of corroſives; to give oyle where vinegar ſhould be given; to heale the hurt of the ſoule deceitfully, is the greateſt hurt and wounding to the ſoule. Flatteries are thoſe pillows ſpoken of in the Prophet (*Ezek*: 13. 18.) ſowed to the Arme-holes or elbowes of wicked men, upon which many ſleepe without feare, till they dye without hope; yea theſe flatte-

καὶ ἐπὶ οὐκ
ἔδωκεν, et me
vineæ edent.
Sept:

flatteries as well as any falsities and errors of doctrine, whether respecting faith or worship, are that *untempered mortar*, of and against which the Prophet speaks in the same Chapter (v. 10. 15.) wherewith some daubed that wall of vaine confidence which others built, while they *seduced the people, saying, peace, and there was no peace*. How often doe the true Prophets warne the people against these flatteries of the false Prophets. And how sadly doth the Prophet *Jeremy* bewaile them (*Lam: 2. 14.*) *Thy Prophets have seene vaine and foolish things for thee, and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turne away thy captivity; but have seene for thee false burdens, and causes of banishment*; that is, the visions which they have seene, they pretend, at least, to have had from God, but they are their owne dreames and brain-sick phantasies, and so the *cause of thy banishment*; they have undone thee with these deceits, soothing thee up in those thy sins, which procured thy banishment, and caused the Lord to thrust thee out, and send thee farre away from thine owne Land. They have fed, yea, filled thee with false hopes, till thy condition was hopeless. How many thousands have been destroyed by flatteries both for here and for ever. And if flattery be so dangerous to the receiver, then

Secondly, It must needs be much more dangerous to the giver. It is no small sin to palliate or cover the sins of others; But it is a farre greater sin to commend the sins of others, or to commend others in their sin. And we may take the measure of this sin by the punishment of it. When we heare the Lord threatening flatterers with suddaine destruction, doth it not proclaime to all the world, that their sin is full of provocation? The Lord beares long with many sorts of sinners, but not with sinners of this sort. *My maker would soone take me away.*

Non leve scellum est veritatem palliare. Merc:

Whence note, Secondly.

God can make quicke dispatch with sinners.

As the grace of God towards sinners, so his wrath needs no long time in preparations. When we designe great actions, we must take time to fit our selves. Princes must have time to set out an Army or a Navy, when they would either defend themselves against, or revenge themselves upon their enemies; But God can presently proceed to action, yea to execution. He that

Nescit tarda molimina spiritus sancti gratia.

T

made

made all with a word speaking, can destroy the wicked as soone as speake the word; he can doe it in the twinkling of an eye, with the turning of a hand. *My Maker would soone take me away.*

Thirdly, Because *Elihu*, being about to speake in that great cause, sets God before him, and God in his judgements, in case he should speake or doe amisse.

Note, Thirdly.

They that doe or speake evill, have reason to expect evill at the hand of God.

If I should flatter (saith Elihu) my Maker would soone take me away. I have reason to feare he will; not that God takes away every sinner as soone as he sins, (God rarely useth Martiall Law, or executes men upon the place, we should live and walke more by sence then by faith if he should doe so) but any sinner may expect it. God (I say) is very patient and long-suffering, he doth not often take sinners away, either in the act, or immediately after the act of sin. Yet there is no sinner but hath cause to feare, lest as soone as he hath done any evill, God should make him feeble evill, and instantly take him away. *David* prayeth (*Psal: 28. 3.*) *Draw me not away with the wicked, and with the workers of iniquity.* There is a two-fold *drawing away* with the workers of iniquity. First, to doe as they doe; that is, wickedly. Thus many are drawne away with the workers of iniquity; and 'tis a good and most necessary part of prayer, to beg that God would not thus draw us away with the workers of iniquity, that is, that he would not suffer the workers of iniquity to draw us away into their lewd and sinfull courses. Secondly, there is a *drawing away* to punishment, and execution. In that sence (I conceive) *David* prayed, *Lord draw me not away with the workers of iniquity*, who are taken away by some sudden 'stroake' of judgement; though I may have provoked thee, yet let not forth thy wrath upon me, as thou sometimes doest upon the workers of iniquity: doe not draw me out as cattell out of the pasture where they have been fed and fatted, for the slaughter. Every worker of iniquity is in danger of present death, and may looke that God will be a swift witness against him: though most are reprieved, yet no man is sure of that.

Againe;

Againe, In that *Elihu* represents God to himselfe ready to take him away, in case of flattery and prevarication in that cause.

Note, Fourthly.

It is good for us to over-awe our soules with the remembrance of the judgements and terrours of God.

'Tis profitable sometimes to converse with the threatnings, as well as with the promises; 'tis profitable to remember what God is able to do against us, as well as to remember what God is able to do for us; Even believers should goe into the dreadfull treasuries of wrath, into the thunders & lightnings of divine displeasure, as well as into the delightfull treasuries of mercy, of love & compassion; it is good for a good man to thinke God may take me away, as well as to thinke God will save and deliver me; we need even these meditations of God, to keepe downe our corruptions, and to fright our lusts. Though it be the more Gospel way to make use of love, yet the Gospel it selfe teacheth us to make use of wrath, (2 Cor: 5. 11.) *Knowing the terrour of the Lord we perswade men.*

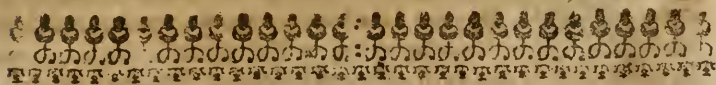
Lastly, Note.

When we goe about any great worke, when we are either to speak or doe in any weighty matter, it is good for us to set God before our eyes, to thinke of and remember our Maker.

As in great undertakings we should remember our Maker, waiting for and depending upon his assistance, strength, and blessing, in what we doe or goe about; so we should remember him to keepe our hearts right. And to remember seriously, believingly and spiritually, that God beholds and seeth us in all our wayes and workes, and that according to the frame of our hearts, and the way that we take in every action, such will the reward and the issue be, cannot but have a mighty command, and an answerable effect upon us. We can hardly doe amisse with God in our eye. And therefore as it is sayd of a wicked man (*Psalm: 10. 4.*) that *through the pride of his countenance he will not seeke after God, God is not in all his thoughts.* So David said of himselfe (though in that Psalm he speaks chiefly as a type of Christ) and so in proportion or as to sincerity every godly man saith like David,

Pſal: 16. 8.) I have ſet the Lord alwayes before me : becauſe he is at my right hand, therefore I ſhall not be moved ; that is, as I ſhall not be utterly overthrowne by any evill of trouble, ſo I ſhall not be overcome by any evill of temptation: or I ſhall not be moved either in a way of diſcouragement by the troubles I meete with, or in a way of enticement by the temptations I meete with. How ſtedfaſt, how unmoveable are they in the worke of the Lord, how doe they keepe off from every evill worke, who ſet the Lord alwayes before them, and have him at their right hand ! Could we but ſet the Lord before us, either in his mercies or in his terrors, we ſhould not be moved from doing our duty in whatſoever we are called to doe.

Thus farre *Elihu* hath drawne out his ſpeech, in a way of preface, preparing himſelfe for his great undertaking with *Job* ; He hath now fully ſhewed the grounds why he undertooke to deale with him, and what method he would uſe in that undertaking. In the next Chapter, and ſo forward to the end of the 37th, we have what he ſayd, and how he mannaged the whole matter.



J O B , Chap 33. Vers. 1, 2, 3.

Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my speeches, and hearken to all my words.

Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart : and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.



Elihu having spent the whole former Chapter in prefacing to *Job's* friends, directs his speech now to *Job* himselfe ; yet not without a renewed Preface, as will appeare in opening this Chapter. Wherein we may take notice of foure heads of his discourse.

First, We have his Preface in the seven former verses of the Chapter.

Secondly, A proposition of the matter to be debated, or of the things that *Elihu* had observed in *Job's* speech about this Controversie, from the 7th verse to the 12th.

Thirdly, We have his confutation of what *Job* had affirmed, from the 12th verse to the 31th.

Lastly, We have his conclusion, exciting *Job* to make answer to what he had spoken, else to heare him speaking, further in the three last verses of the Chapter.

Elihu in his Preface, moves *Job* about two things ; First, to attend what he was about to say.

Secondly, To make reply to and answer what he should say.

Elihu moves *Job* to the former duty severall wayes.

First, By a mild Entreaty and sweet Insinuation in the first verse ; *Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my speeches, and hearken to my words.* As if he had sayd, *I doe not come authoritatively and rigorously*

gorously upon thee, to command or demand thy attention, but as a faithfull friend I desire thee to attend unto my speech, and hearken to my voice.

Secondly, He moves him to heare, by professing his own readinesse and preparednesse to speak, in the 2d verse; *Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth*; that is, I have been (as it were) tuning my instrument, and fitting my selfe for discourse, let me not loole my labour nor my study.

Thirdly, He moves him to attend from the sincerity and gracious Ingenuity of his heart in that which he had to say to him. This he layeth before him in the 3d verse; *My words shall be of the uprightness of my heart, and my lips shall utter knowledge clearly*. What better Encouragement to heare! And

Fourthly, *Elihu* moves him to heare from the Consideration of his present state, as a man, not only made by God, but by him instructed for the work which he had undertaken, the former of which is Exprest, the latter Implied in the 4th verse; *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*. Thus *Elihu* Calls our *Job* to heare. And

Secondly, As he invites him to heare what he had to say, so he provokes him to answer what he should say, vers. 5. *If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up*. As if he had said, Be not discouraged, take heart man, doe thy best to defend thy selfe, and make good thy owne cause against what I shall say; Spare me not; Doe thy best, thy utmost.

Having thus encouraged him in General to answer, he proceeds to give him two speciall Motives.

First, From their Common state or Condition, in the 6th verse; *Behold, I am according to thy wish in Gods stead; I also am formed out of the clay*. As if he had sayd; *You have often desired God to plead with, or that God would heare your plea; now consider, I am in Gods stead, though a man like your selfe*.

Secondly, He encourageth him from the tendernesse of his spirit toward him, respecting his present Condition, promising to deal with, or treat him fairely, gently, in the 7th verse; *Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavy upon thee*. That favour *Job* had asked of God, in the 9th Chapter; *Let not thy terror make me afraid*. Now saith *Elihu*, that which thou didst fear from God, thou needest not at all feare
in

in dealing with me, *My terror ſhall not make thee afraid, &c.* Thus *Elihu* begins with *Job*, that he might lead him to receive ſaſely, or answer fully what he had to say.

The three first verses of the Chapter, Containe the first part of the Preface, wherein *Elihu* excites and calls forth *Jobs* attention by those foure Considerations already distinctly proposed, the first whereof is layd downe,

Verſ. 1. *Wherefore, Job, I pray thee, heare my ſpeeches, and hearken to all my words.*

Elihu begins very mildly, sweetly, insinuatingly, even entreatingly, and beseechingly, *Wherefore*

I pray thee.

The word which we translate, *I pray thee*, is in the Hebrew *adhortan-* language a monasyllable adverb of obsecration or exhortation. *Ita vel exci-*
pray thee. tantu tum eri-
am obsecrantu.

Hence note.

'Tis good to use gentlenesse towards those with whom we have to deale, especially with those who are either outwardly afflicted, or troubled in spirit.

Entreaties have great power; and therefore though the Prophets and Apostles speake sometimes in a threatening way, and command attention upon utmost peril, yet for the most part they bespeake it with Entreaties, (2 Cor: 5. 20.) Now then we as *Embassadors for Christ*, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead be ye reconciled to God. The Apostles went about a begging, as it were, with this message, with the best message that ever was carried forth to the world, *Reconciliation unto God; we pray you.* And againe (2 Cor: 6. 1.) *We then as workers together with him, beseech you also that you receive not the grace of God in vaine;* that is, the doctrine of the Gospel holding forth the grace and favour of God freely in Jesus Christ, (1 Thes: 4. 1.) Furthermore, we beseech you brethren, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walke and to please God, so ye would abound more and more. As he did beseech them not to receive the grace of God in vaine, so he did beseech them to a progress in & an Improvement of that grace. Again (1 Thes: 2. 7.)

We

We were gentle among you, even as a Nurse cherisheth her Children; how tender is a nurse to the infant hanging at her breast, or dandled on her knee. Speak ye Comfortably to Jerusalem, was the Lords direction when she was in her warfare; that is, in a troubled and afflicted condition. (Isa. 40. 2.) The Hebrew is, Speak to her heart; speak such words as may revive her heart, and adde fresh spirits and life to her. The Apostles rule for the restoring of those that are fallen, is, that they should be kindly treated (Gal. 6. 1.) Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye that are spirituall restore such an one with the spirit of meeknesse. It is a great poynt of holy skill so to order a reproofe as not to provoke; so to speak as to speak open, or pick the lock of the heart; Affectionate Entreaties are blessed pick-locks, which doe not straine the wards, but effectually lift up the holders and shoote the bolt of the heart, causing it to stand wide open to receive and take in the truth of promises, counsels and reproofes. Mecke words meeken the spirit. 'Tis hard to refuse what we perceive spoken in love; and if any thing will soften a hard heart, soft language is most likely to doe it. When Abigail came out and met David upon his way, hot upon revenge, yea having (upon the matter) sworn revenge against Nabal and his house; yet her Entreaties and mild words overcame that mighty warriour, at least, took off the edge of his spirit, and of all his party, (1 Sam. 25. 33.) Nor did he only accept of or submit to her counsel, but gave thanks both to God and her for it; Blessed be the Lord, and blessed be thy advice, which hast kept me this day from shedding blood. Gentle words, like gentle raine, soake deep, and make the soule, like a fruitfull tree, bud and blossome. For as passion in the speaker, begets passion in the hearer, and heate brings forth heate, so kinde and kindly words, are not only most usefull, but most powerfull. There is a rebuking, and that Cuttingly, or a speaking of cutting words, usefull in some cases, then especially, when sinners have not only done evill, but are settled and resolved in it. But in case of affliction, specially of inward affliction, or trouble of spirit, soft words are best and doe best. Heare, I pray thee, saith Elihu.

And hearken to all my words.

Here's hearing, and hearkening, to hearken is more then to heare;

heare ; to heare is barely to receive the sound of words ; but to hearken is to take up the sense of them, or as it were to suck out the strength and sweetnesse of them ; to hearken is to weigh or ponder every tittle spoken, and take the value of it. The word in the text, which signifies *to hearken*, hath a singular elegancy in it. One of the Rabbins renders, *Eare my words* ; heare my words and Eare them. The same word which in the verbe signifies to hearken, which is the worke of the eare, signifies also the eare, or instrument of that worke in the nounce. To *eare words*, notes the most diligent attention, as to *eye a thing*, notes the most accurate inspection. The word signifies also the beam of a ballance, because by the eare, or by the two ears (as by a ballance) words are tryed and poyted, whether they are weighty and solid, or light and chaffy ; when *Elhu* saith, hearken to, or weigh my words, he intimates that he meant to speak words which had worth in them, or that he meant to speak matter more then words. And therefore he would not have a word lost, *Hearken*, saith he,

To all my words.

To all, not to this or that only, but to all ; As if he had sayd, *I intend not, and I hope I shall not speak one needlesse or unusefull words* ; not a word beside the businesse. Therefore *hearken to all my words.*

Hence note ; First.

They who speak to instruction, admonition or exhortation, should not use one word more then is usefull, not a word more then is to the purpose.

Seeing, every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account for it in the day of Judgement, (Math: 12. 36.) How should every man take heed of speaking an idle word, a word of which he can give no good account for any good it is likely to doe. Idle words will make sad worke one day, and words of no value or account, will turne to a heavy account in the great day. *That's an idle word, which doth neither worke the heart for good, nor strengthen the hand to or in a good worke.* And if we should be carefull not to speake one idle word, or not one word unworthy to be heard, how should we avoyd evill words, or words which corrupt the hearers.

Secondly, As the words referre to that duty which *Elihu* minds *Job* of, and moved him to, *Hearkening to all his words.*

Note.

They who heare, especially about holy things and soule-matters, should heare all.

One word should not be lost, when every word is precious. We gather up the filings and least dusts of Gold. The eare should gather all that truth which the mouth scatters, and the heart should lay it up as treasure. We may charge many sorts of men with deficiency at eare-worke. And surely if men will not heare all that they ought to believe and doe, they can neither doe nor believe any thing that they heare.

First, Some will not heare the word at all, they are like the deafe Adder stopping their eares at the voyce of the charmer, charme he never so wisely to them.

Secondly, Others thinke that there's not a word more to be heard, but what they have heard already, who can speak what they know not?

Thirdly, There are few who hearken to any word that is spoken; that is, who make it their businesse to heare, who heare with diligence, and labour at it. As it is a great labour to speak, so I assure you, it is no small nor easie labour to heare, if you heare indeed and as you should. To heare the word is the exercise of the whole soule. Among many hearers, there are but few-hearckeners, such I meane as weigh and consider what they heare.

Fourthly, There are very few who heare and hearken to all the words of righteousness and salvation. As some though they heare all, yet hearken to halves, so others will heare but halfe, or only so much as pleaseth them of what is spoken. When the King of *Judah* (*Jer. 36. 23.*) had the Role brought to him which *Baruch* had written from the mouth of *Jeremiah*, he heard three or foure leaves of it read to him as he sate by the fire, and then he caused it to be cut with a penknife and cast into the fire; He did not read it out, he had enough of it, he had (as we say) *his belly full*, but his heart was altogether empty, he was very angry and vext at the word, but not at all humbled nor affected with it; and therefore would not heare all those words.

Againe,

Againe, To hearken is to obey; to submit and yield up our selves to the truth we heare. *Samuel tells Saul* (1 Sam: 15. 22.) *To obey is better then sacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of Rams;* to obey and to hearken is the same thing; the obedient eare is the hearkening eare. *Mine eare hast thou opened* (saith Christ, *Psal: 40. 6.*) This opening or digging of his eare (as we put in the Margin) signified his readinesse to obey, as 'tis expressed (v. 7, 8.) *Then sayd I loe I come; I delight to doe thy will O my God.* And in reference to this he had sayd before (v. 6.) *'Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required;* that is, for themselves, or comparatively to that, which in the volume of thy booke is written of me, that I should doe. Which clearely expounds and is almost the same in termes with that of *Samuel; To obey is better then sacrifice, and to hearken, then the fat of Rams.* Thus *Elihu* presseth *Job* to hearken to *all his words* obedientially, or to hearken with a purpose to obey. Take a few Considerations, why we should both heare and hearken to, that is, obey, the whole mind of God, all those words which have the stamp of divine authority upon them.

First, All the words of God are alike holy and true, pure and precious. Though some truths are more necessary to be knowne and believed then others, yet all are necessary; nor can we be discharged from the duty of hearing and obeying any one of them, if called.

Secondly, There is a like or the same power and authority in all the words of God; so that to neglect or slight any one word, is to put a slight upon the authority of God himselfe. There is but one Law-giver and word-sender.

Thirdly, Not to submit to any one word (though it be supposed we hearken to all others) drawes upon us the guilt of non-submission or disobedience to the whole word of God. That's the Apostles conclusion (*James 2. 12. ver.*) *whosoever shall keepe the whole Law, and yet offend in one poynt, he is guilty of all;* for though in many things we offend all, yet there is a Gospel-sence wherein we are said to keep the whole Law of God. And so the Apostles meaning is, that whosoever shall give himselfe a loose or a liberty, whosoever shall dispence or indulge himselfe in breaking any one Command of God, he breakes all,

that is, he declares himselfe ready to break all; if he had a like occasion or temptation.

Fourthly, We would have all our words hearkened to by God; we would have God grant all our Petitions, all our requests, and supplications, and shall not we hearken to and obey all the precepts of God? Shall we not receive and believe all his promises and threatnings?

Fifthly, As we desire God would, so God hath promised to heare all our words, even all the requests of his people which are according to his will. Christ speakes without restriction (*Math. 21. 22.*) *All things whatsoever ye aske in my name, believing ye shall receive.* And againe (*John 14. 13, 14.*) *Whatsoever ye shall aske in my name, that will I doe, &c.* Nor are there any restrictions upon the promises of God in granting and doing what we aske, but only these two; First, that we aske *right things*; Secondly, that we aske *aright*. Now if the Lord hath promised to hearken to all our words, not to this or that, but to all our words which are according to his will, (we have no liberty to aske beyond the will of God, beyond the rule of Scripture, nor can we aske any thing beyond that, but it is to our hurt and damage; now if God (I say) will hearken to all our words) should not we hearken to all his?

Lastly, The condition upon which God hath promised to heare all our words, is, that we should be ready to heare and hearken to all his words, (*1 John 3. 22.*) *Whatsoever we aske we receive, because we keepe his Commandements, and doe the things that please him.* It were not confidence, but highest and most hatefull impudence, to expect that God should please us by giving us what we aske, while we refuse (which is the condition of that promise) to doe the things that please him. Thus *Elisha* would have *Job* hearken to all his words, he being about to speake, not his owne, but the words of God. And that *Job* might not delay the opening of his eare to heare, *Elisha* tells him further in the next verse, that himselfe had already opened his mouth to speake.

Vers. 2. *Behold now I have opened my mouth, my tongue hath spoken in my mouth.*

This phrase of opening the mouth, imports foure things.

First,

First, That a man hath been long silent; they that are full of talke, and speake out of season, may be said to have their mouth alwayes open, rather then at any time to open their mouthes. But *Elihu* professed in the former Chapter that he had waited as a Disciple to heare and to learne, and had waited with utmost patience; therefore he might well say, *Behold now I have opened my mouth*, and taken upon me to speake. So (Chap: 3. 1.) after *Job* had late silent a great while, it is said, *Then Job opened his mouth, and cursed the day of his birth*; Thus to open the mouth, intimates much silence or forbearance of speech, and long expectation of a season or opportunity to speake.

Secondly, Opening the mouth, implyeth as speaking after much silence, so with much prudence. A fooles mouth is therefore sayd to be alwayes open, because whensoever he speaketh, he is found speaking imprudently and impertinently. But a wise man will not speake, unlesse he may speake to purpose, and so opens his mouth to speake. *Solomon* saith, (*Prov. 24. 7.*) *Wisdom is too high for a foole, he openeth not his mouth in the gate*; that is, he is unfit to speak in the presence of wise and judicious men, he may open his mouth in the streets, and in common Company, but he opens not his mouth in the gate, where the Elders and Magistrates used to meete and judge the weightiest matters. There is a foure-fold Consideration to be had, as to the due opening of the mouth, (And 'tis no small matter to open the mouth with those Considerations.)

Os aperire dicuntur apud Hebræos, qui instituunt sermonem serium et de re gravi.
Pisc:

First, Consideration is to be had of the place and Company where, and to whom we speake. We must not cast pearles before swine, nor give strong meate to children.

Secondly, The time and season wherein we speake must be considered; every truth is not fit for every time. *Christ* would not speak all at once to his Disciples, for this reason, (*John 16. 12.*) *I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot beare them now*; and because ye cannot beare them now, therefore I will not say them now.

Thirdly, Consideration is to be had how and in what way to speake, whether instructingly, or exhortingly, reprovngly, or Comfortably, we should alwayes labour to divide the word of God, and what we speake from it aright, giving every one his proper part and portion. Then a man opens his mouth to speake, when:

when he Conſiders how to ſort his ſpeech according to the ſtate of things and perſons before him.

Fourthly, Conſideration is to be had of the end or tendency of ſpeech, what our ayme and mark is ; we ſay, *a fooles bolt is ſoone ſhot*, he Conſiders not his ayme and mark in ſpeaking ; he that opens his mouth, looks to his mark, and drives a deligne, or hath a purpoſe in every word that paſſeth from him.

Inde videtur dici דאך pyrho, quod obſeſſi vel uti uires inflati turgeſcant & ſpiritus immundus ex illorum ventre respondeat.

Thirdly, This phraſe of opening the mouth, notes liberty of ſpeech, or boldneſſe in ſpeaking ; when a man doth not ſpeake in his throat, as untaught children doe, nor in his belly, or in a bottle, as Witches and Sorcerers are ſayd to doe, that peepe and mutter (*Iſa. 8. 19.*) When a man (*I ſay*) doth not ſpeak any of theſe covert wayes, but freely and liberally, then indeed he opens his mouth to ſpeake. We have that Expreſſion in the promiſe, (*Ezek. 29. 21.*) *In that day will I cauſe the horn of the houſe of Iſrael to bud forth, and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the miſt of them, and they ſhall know that I am the Lord ;* That is, I will give thee boldneſſe, and liberty of ſpeech : time was when thou didſt not dare to ſpeake a word for God, or of God, of his praiſe, name and worſhip, or if thou didſt it was but in a Corner, or whiſperd in ſecret ; but the time ſhall come when I will give thee the opening of the mouth ; thou ſhalt ſpeak my truth and praiſes boldly : and the Enemy ſhall know that I the Lord have procured thee this liberty. 'Tis a great mercy when God gives his people the opening of the mouth, or liberty of ſpeech, to ſpeak boldly, no man hindring, no nor ſo much as diſcouraging them. The Prophet makes that the character of *an evill time, when the prudent keep ſilence*, (*Amos 5. 13.*) As in evill or calamitous times, it becomes the Godly prudent to be willingly ſilent, adoring the juſtice of Gods ſevereſt diſpenſations towards them with patience and without murmuring at his hand. So in ſome evill times they are forced to keepe ſilence, (though as *David ſpoke, Pſal. 39. 2.*) their ſorrows be ſtirred) either left by ſpeaking, even nothing but truth and reaſon, they draw further ſorrows upon themſelves ; or becauſe they ſee it but loſt labour to ſpeake to a people obſtinate and reſolved on their way.

Fourthly, This phraſe of opening the mouth to ſpeake, notes the things ſpoken to be of very great worth, ſuch as have been long concocted and digeſted, and at laſt ready to be brought forth

forth, as out of the treasury of an honest and understanding heart. *Os aperire est bene discussa et bene discussa et*
 The heart is the treasury of words, there they are stored up: *præmeditata habere dicen-*
 and from thence issued forth; as Christ saith, *Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* As there is a stock of evill words in the hearts of evill men, so of good and gracious words in the hearts of Godly men, and when they open their mouthes (according to this notion) it is to bring forth the treasures, and riches of their hearts, to bring forth the gold and silver and precious things stored up there; all these are very usefull interpretations of this phrase; and I might give distinct observations from them, but it may suffice to have named them. I shall only addé that the last is conceived by some to be chiefly intended in the latter branch of this verse.

My tongue hath spoken in my mouth.

This seems a strange Expression; where should the tongue speak but in the mouth? when the tongue is out of the mouth, can it speak? as the mouth cannot speak without the tongue, so the tongue cannot speak out of the mouth: why then doth he say;

My tongue hath spoken in my mouth?

The Hebrews, *In my palate*, the palate being a part of the mouth, and one speciall Instrument of speech (Naturalists reckon five, *The lips, the tongue, the teeth, the palate, & the throat*) is put for all; but there is more in it then so, for every man speaks in his mouth, or by the palate which is the *heaven, roose or cieling of the mouth.* Therefore when *Elihu* saith, *My tongue hath spoken in my mouth,* or in my palate; The palate may be considered as the instrument of tasting as well as of speaking. We say such a thing is very savory to the palate; And we call that *Palate wine*, which is quick and lively, briske and pleasant to the tast. Thus when *Elihu* saith here, *My tongue hath spoken in my mouth or palate*; His meaning is; I have uttered only that which I have wel considered, what my tongue hath spoken to you, I have tasted my selfe; I have put every word to my palate; For as a man that tasteth wine or any other sapid thing, must have it upon his palate, before he can make a Judgement, whether it be sweet or sharpe, quick or flat: so saith *Elihu*, my mouth hath spoken in my palate, I tasted my words before I spake them.

Palatum oris calum est. Drusi: Præmeditata et quasi intelligentia mea palato prægustata sum prolatum. Bez: Bene sapui verba mea antequam illa effundero tibi aliquid sapienda et gustanda mandarem. Bold: Non sequar verba aliorum, sed propriis conceptis enuncia-
bo. Aquina:

Hence

Hence note.

Judicious and wise men will tast and try what they intend to speake before they utter it.

The speaker presents his words to the tast of the hearer ; For as this Scripture hath it at the 3^d verse of the next Chapter, *The care tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat* ; now he that ventures his words to the tast and censure of others, had need take a tast of them before he doth it. *My tongue hath spoken in my mouth.*

Secondly, From the scope of *Elihu* in adding this, namely, to gaine attention,

Note.

There is great reason we should heare that carefully, which the speaker hath prepared with care.

They who regard not what they speake, deserve no regard when they speake ; but a weighing speaker, should have a weighing hearer. And what any mans tongue (in the sence of *Elihu*) hath *spoken in his mouth*, that we should heare, not only with our eare, but with our heart. This a strong argument to quicken attention, yet *Elihu* gives in another, and a stronger in the next verse.

Vers. 3. *My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart, my lips shall utter knowledge clearly.*

In the former verse *Elihu* called for an open eare, because he opened his mouth, and was about to speak, or had spoken what he had well tasted. In this verse he presseth the same duty, by professing all manner of Ingenuity and Integrity in what he was about to speake. He would speake not only seriously, but honestly, not only from his understanding, but his conscience.

My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart, &c.

The meaning is not, that the uprightnesse of his heart should be the subject upon which he would treat, though that be a blessed and most usefull subject, yet it was not the poynt he intended to discusse : but when he saith, *My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart*, his meaning is, my words shall flow from the

the uprightnesse of my heart, I will speake in the uprightnesse of my heart, or according to the uprightnesse of my heart, my words shall be upright as my heart is; the plain truth is this, *I will speak Sincere et abs- truth plainly, I'll speak as I thinke, you may see the Image of my que ullo fuco heart upon every word, I will speak without dawbing, without proferam animi- either simulation or dissimulation.* Some conceive this to be a *mei sensu. Bezi* secret reproofe of, or reflection upon *Jobs* friends, as if *Elihu* had suspected them to have spoken worle of *Job*; then they could thinke him to be in their hearts. But as we cannot judge mens hearts directly, so there is no reason why we should judge so of their hearts conjecturally. It is enough to the purpose, that *Elihu* asserts his owne uprightnesse without reflecting upon or suspecting the uprightnesse of those, who had dealt with *Job* before; *My words shall be in the uprightnesse of my heart.*

This uprightnesse of his heart may have a three-fold Opposition. First, to passion; Some speake in the heat and fire of their hearts, rather then in the uprightnesse of them; it is good to speake with the heat and fire of zeal in our hearts; but take heed of the heat and fire of passion, I will not speake in the heat, but in the uprightnesse of my heart, saith *Elihu*.

Secondly, This uprightnesse may be oppos'd to partiality, I will not spare when there is cause to speake home, nor presse, nor load thee with any thing where there is not cause for it.

Thirdly, This uprightnesse in speaking, may also be oppos'd to speaking without cleare ground or prooffe. And 'tis supposed that *Elihu* aymed more specially at this, *Jobs* friends having been so high in his reproofe, charging him with divers things for which they had no prooffe; but only a vehement suspicion. The words of *Eliphaz* are full (Chap: 22. 5.) *Is not thy wickednesse great, and thine iniquities infinite? for thou hast taken a pledge from thy brother for nought, and stripped the naked of their clothing: Thou hast sent widowes empty away, and the armes of the fatherlesse have been broken; Surely Eliphaz could not speake this in the uprightnesse of his heart, knowing it to be so, though he spake it in this uprightnesse of his heart, that he really thought it to be so. Which kind of uprightnesse Paul had in persecuting the Saints, (Acts 26. 9.) I verily thought with my selfe, that I ought to doe many things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth.* Thus *Jobs* friends verily thought he had done many grosse things con-

Non loquar ad calumniendū vel ad ridendū, sed simpliciter animo ad veritatem manifestandam. Aquin

trary to the Law of God, but they only thought so; they could not prove it; This is a lame kinde of uprightnesse, and in opposition to this *Elihu* might now say, I will not charge or burden thee with any thing but what I know to be true, and had even from thy own mouth. *My words shall be of the uprightnesse of my heart.*

I shall not stay to give particular notes from these words, according to this three-fold opposition; The reader may improve them in that, as he hath occasion; Only in Generall Observe.

The heart and tongue should goe together.

The tongue should alwayes be the hearts Interpreter, and the heart should alwayes be the tongues suggester; what is spoken with the tongue should be first itampt upon the heart, and wrought off from it. Thus it should be in all our Communications and exhortations, especially when we speak or exhort about the things of God, and dispence the mysteries of heaven. *David* spake from his heart while he spake from his faith (*Psal: 116. 10.*) *I believed, therefore have I spoken.* Believing is an act of the heart, with the heart man believeth; so that to say, *I believed, therefore have I spoken;* Is as if he had said, *I would never have spoken these things, if my heart had not been cleare and upright in them.* The Apostle takes up that very protestation from *David* (2 *Côr: 4. 13.*) *According as it is written, I believed, therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak;* that is, we moved others to believe nothing but what we believed, yea, were fully assured of, our selves, as the next words of the Apostle import, *Knowing, that he which raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you.* To speak what we in our hearts believe, is to speak in the uprightnesse of our hearts.

Some speak without their hearts, that is, coldly, they have no heart at all in speaking; as some heare without their hearts, only with their eares; so some speak without the heart, only with the tongue.

Secondly, Others speake what was never in their hearts; They have no experience in themselves of what they say to others. They throw out their words at a venture. It is sad to
speak.

ſpeak that as a truth, or a Comfort to others, which we have not found in our ſelves, that is, have not felt the operation of it upon our owne hearts. How are they to be lamented, who ſpeak of the things of God as a Stage-player, who acts the part of, or Perſonates a Prince, being himſelfe but a poore plebeian. It is bad to ſpeak without our hearts, or coldly, but 'tis worſe to ſpeak what was never in our hearts, or hypocritically.

Thirdly, Not a few ſpeak quite againſt their hearts; theſe are at fartheſt diſtance from ſpeaking in the uprightness of their heart; they ſpeak with a falſe and malicious heart, they ſpeak with a deceitful and double heart, with a heart and a heart. There are three wayes wherein men ſpeak againſt their owne hearts and Conſciences.

First, In the profeſſion which they make of themſelves, (*Rev. 2. 9.*) Chriſt writing to the Church of *Smyrna*, ſaith, *I know thy faith and patience, &c.* and the *Blasphemy of them who ſay they are Jewes and are not, but lye, &c.* And ſo at the 9th verſe of the 3d Chapter, *Which ſay they are Jewes and are not, but doe lye.* We are not to underſtand it ſtrictly, that they profeſſed themſelves to be of the Nation of the *Jewes*, the Children of *Abraham*. A *Jew* there is, any one that holdeth out a profeſſion of the faith of Chriſt. Old Teſtament words are often applyed to the New Teſtament, or Goſpel ſtate; they ſay they are *Jewes*, that is, true believers, but they are not, and doe lye; to lye, is to goe againſt a mans mind, againſt his Conſcience; they make a great profeſſion of godlineſſe and holineſſe, of Chriſt and his wayes, and they lye at every word; for indeed they are *the Synagogue of Satan*. Thus at this day ſome make profeſſion before the Church of God, and by ſuch profeſſion get admittance into the Church of God, who yet belong to the Synagogue of Satan. The Apoſtle *John* ſpeakes of ſuch, (*1 Ep: Joh: 2. 19.*) *They went out from us, but they were not of us*; that is, they were not truly of us, though they once deſired to come in and joyne themſelves to us, and for a time walked with us.

Secondly, The tongue ſpeaks againſt the heart many times in the promiſes which men make to others of what they will doe. O what Courteſies and friendſhips will ſome men profeſſe! they will tell you aloud how they love you, and how much they are your ſervants, while there is nothing in their hearts, but deceit

and guile, yea possibly nothing but wrath and revenge to death. Thus *Ishmael* went out weeping all along as he went (*Jer: 41. 6.*) and sayd, *Come to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam*, yet he invited them into the City as poore birds into a snare, to destroy them presently; He was seemingly troubled at their affliction and wept, but his were Crocodiles tears, he murdered them as soone as he had them in his power.

Thirdly, Some speake against their hearts doctrinally or in the Doctrines which they propound and teach. There are three sorts who speake amittle doctrinally.

First, Some speake that which is not right in the uprightnesse of their hearts; or, I may say, they speake that which is false with a true heart; that is, they think it to be a truth which they utter, when 'tis an error, and will be found so at last. When ever we see different opinions stitly maintained among honest and godly men, (which though it be a very sad sight, yet it is too often seene, in that case I say) one side alwayes speaks that which is false with a true heart, and utters error uprightly. The truth is, some men defend an error with better and more honest hearts, then some others defend the truth. For

Secondly, There are such as speake right without any uprightnesse of heart, or they speake truth with a false heart; this *Elisha* specially professeth against; he would not only speake that which was right, but with uprightnesse. The Apostle found several teachers of this second sort (*Phil: 1. 16, 17, 18.*) Some preach Christ, that is, the Gospel, yea the truth of Christ in the Gospel, (else the Apostle would not have rejoyced in it, as he professeth he did at the 18th verse, *I therein doe rejoyce, yea and will rejoyce*) Yet these men did not preach in the uprightnesse of their own hearts; for, saith he, *Some Preach Christ out of envy and strife, and some out of good will*, (they preached Christ, pure Gospel, yet not with pure hearts, for, he adds, they did it) *supposing to adde affliction to my bonds*; They preacht to oppose the Apostles more then to set up Christ, and though they preached the truth, yet they did it more in pretence then in truth; as 'tis sayd at the 18th verse. The same Apostle speakes of others, (*2 Cor: 11. 13, 14.*) who preached what was true for the matter, and yet he calls them *false Apostles, deceitfull workers, transforming themselves into the Apostles of Christ, and no marvell, for*

Satan himſelfe is transformed into an Angel of light. They formed and ſhaped themſelves into Angels of light, and tooke up the doctrine of the faithfull Apoſtles of Jeſus Chriſt in ſome things, yet they did it not in the uprightneſſe of their hearts, but that they might weaken the eſtimation of the true Apoſtles in the hearts of the people, and ſet up themſelves there, that ſo in other things they might with greater efficacy or more effectually, miſ-lead them or draw them into error. Thus ſome are found ſpeaking lyes in the truth of their hearts, and others ſpeaking truth in the falſeneſſe of their hearts.

Thirdly, Many ſpeak that which is falſe with a falſe heart; This is the height of wickedneſſe. The Apoſtle prophesieth of ſuch (*1 Tim: 4. 2.*) *Who ſhall ſpeake lyes in hypocriſie*: the matter they ſpeak is a lye, and they ſpeak it with a baſe and falſe heart too. And therefore he ſaith of theſe in the ſame verſe, *Their conſciences are ſeared with a hot iron*; that is, they are inſcible both of the miſchiefe they doe, and of the miſery they muſt ſuffer.

Elihu profeſſeth himſelfe to be none of all theſe; He ſpake that which was right and true in the uprightneſſe and truth of his heart. Such a one the Apoſtle directeth the Goſpel Deacon to be, (*1 Tim: 3. 9.*) *Holding the myſtery of faith in a pure Conſcience*, which is the ſame with an upright heart. And he tells us (*1 Theſ: 2. 4, 5.*) That himſelfe did not uſe any guile in the miniſtration of the Goſpel: He had truth on his ſide, and he had truth in his heart, as he alſo profeſſed to his Brethren the *Jewes*, (*Rom: 9. 1, 2.*) *I ſpeak the truth in Chriſt, I lye not, my Conſcience alſo bearing me witneſſe in the holy Ghoſt, &c.* And againe, (*2 Cor: 2. 17.*) *We are not of thoſe that Corrupt the truth; we ſpeak the truth, and ſpeak it truly.* He is a better ſpeaker that ſpeaks with an upright heart, then he that ſpeakes with an eloquent tongue; He is the happy ſpeaker, who ſpeakes more with his heart then with his tongue, that can ſay with *Elihu* to *Job*, *My words ſhall be of the uprightneſſe of my heart.* Words ſpoken of that ſubject, and words flowing from that ſubject, are lovely words. Of this latter ſort ſaith *Elihu* to *Job*, *My words ſhall be.*

And my lips ſhall utter knowledge clearly.

Job had charged his three friends, (*Chap: 13. 4.*) that they were

Quia tribus com- were forgers of lyes. This *Elihu* engageth against, while he saith, muni Jobis im- My lips shall utter knowledge clearly.

posherat, quod The word here translated *Clearly*, is rendered two wayes.

essent fabrica- First, As an Adjective.

tures menda- Secondly, As an Adverb.

ho: a se exale- Many render it as an Adjective, *My lips shall utter cleare dit dicens &* knowledge, or distinct knowledge; cleare as to the matter; pure, sententiam la- plaine, without any adulteration, deceit, or guile, as to the man- bia mea puram- ner. So the word is often used, I might give you many Scrip- loquentur. A- tures for it. The Prophet speaking in the person of Christ (*Isa: 49.*

quini: 2.) saith, *He hath made me a polished shaft*, the Hebrew is, a pure planum perspi-

cuum, a fucos- shaft, a glittering, shining shaft. (*Jer: 5. 11.*) *He made bright* alienum sincerum

& ab omni his arrowes, there this word is used. It is applyed also to Chiefe scoria doli aut

mendacij pur- men (*1 Chron: 7. 48.*) *These were Choyce men*, pure men. So saith

gatorum. *Elihu* (*My lips shall utter cleare shining pure knowledge.*)

Merc:

Hence note.

We should speak cleare truth. Truth without mixture, truth well winnowed, doctrine well refined.

The commandement of the Lord is a pure word, (*Psal: 19. 8.*) There's not any dross at all in it, 'tis like silver tryed seven times in the fire (*Psal: 12. 6.*) The Prophet among other blessings which God promisseth to his Church and people, hath this (*Isa: 30. 24.*) *The Oxen likewise and the young Asses that eare the ground shall eate cleane Provender, free from the straw, and chaff, dust and darnel.* But may we not here renew the Apostles question, (*1 Cor: 9. 9, 10.*) *Doth God take care for oxen?* or saith he it altogether for our sakes? for our sakes no doubt it is written; That the mouth of the ox treading out the corne, should not be muzzled, was written for the Ministers sake, to assure them, that while they labour in the Gospel to feed souls, their bodies should be fed. And that the oxen and young asses shall eate cleane provender, was written for the peoples sake, to assure them, that Christ would send them such Ministers as should feed them with pure holy wholesome doctrine, not with the chaffe of unwritten traditions, nor with the mixtures of humane inventions. They should be taught cleare knowledge, as *Elihu* here speaketh. This mercy was also prophecied (*Zeph: 3. 9.*) *Then will I turne to the people a pure language, or a Clean lip:* it is this word, that is, what

what they speak, shall be pure truth. Their language shall be, not only Grammatically pure, proper and genuine, but Theologically pure, without any tincture of error in it.

Secondly, As the word is taken (according to our translation) Adverbially.

Note.

We ought to speake truth clearly.

Some speake cleare truths, who yet doe not speake them clearly. They speake great truths, yet obscure them in their own way of expressions; they who wrap up sound doctrine in hard uncouth words, or deliver it in an unnecessary multitude of words, doe rather puzzle and confound their Auditors, then enforme or instruct them. And they who speake not knowledge clearly, are like those who mud the waters, or raise a dust in the ayre, which will not let others see distinctly what they hold or put in either. Speaking in darke words and strange notions, is like speaking in a strange language. They only speake profitably, who speake clearly. We commonly say, *Truth seekes no corners*, truth would not be hid. What are obscure and ambiguous words, words of a doubtfull construction and interpretation, but *corners*, wherein many hide truth, while they pretend to speake and publish it. Such speakers as well as they who speake in an unknowne language, are Barbarians to their hearers. And therefore as the Apostle in reference to an unknowne tongue, so should we say in reference to any covert or obscure way of speaking in our owne mother tongue, *We had rather speake five words that others may be edified, then ten thousand words in hard and strange expressions*. Though we speake in a knowne language, yet doubtfull words hinder edifying as much as an unknowne language doth; yea such are as a forreiner to their hearers, while they speake in their owne Country tongue: 'Tis a speciall gift of God, to speake knowledge clearly. The Apostle hath left that excellent advice with all who are called to speake the great things of eternall life, (1 Pet. 4. 11.) *If any man speake* (that is, if he speake about the things of God, divine things) *let him speake as the Oracles of God*. What are they? The oracles of God are the knowne word of God. But how are those oracles to be knowne? Surely as God spake them, plainly and clearly; The oracles of God were spoken without ambigu-

*Craſus Halym
peneirans mag-
nam perveriet
opum vin.*

ty, therefore let no man ſpeake them as the oracles of the devil were ſpoken, or as the devill ſpake his oracles, that is, ambiguouſly and doubtfully ; The devill of old gave out all his answers and oracles doubtfully and darkly to his darke and blinded votaries ; what he ſayd might beare ſeverall Conſtructions. And he ſpake ſo on purpoſe, that whatſoever the event or iſſue proved to be, he (though the father of lyes) might have the reputation of ſpeaking truth. The Devils oracle gave *Craſus* ſuch an answer as he might Interpret either of a great ſucceſſe, or of a great overthrow, when he asked counſel about his warres. And when *Saul* came to Enquire of the Witch of *Endor*, that is, of the Devill, (*1 Sam: 28. 11.*) he gave him a doubtfull reſolve ; *To morrow ſhalt thou and thy Sons be with me* (*v. 19.*) Which ambiguous answer might be underſtood as of the next day following, ſo indefinitely of any day neere approaching. Satan loves not to ſpeake knowledge clearely. But the ſervants and meſſengers of Chriſt, muſt uſe great plainneſſe of ſpeech while they are treating of and giving out the mind of God to his people ; and be carefull that as the doctrine is ſound which they deliver, ſo there may be a cleareneſſe in their delivering of it. Their lips (as *Elihu* engaged his ſhould) ought to utter knowledge clearely.

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 4, 5, 6, 7.

The spirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.

Behold, I am according to thy wish in Gods stead: I also am formed out of the clay.

Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavie upon thee.

IN these foure verses, *Elihu* still prosecutes a discrete pra-
fatory insinuation both of himselfe and of his intended dis-
course into the heart of *Job*, that both might find welcome
and good entertainment there. *Elihu* had assured him at the third
verse, that he would speak in the uprightnes of his heart, or
that he would deale candidly, and clearly with him. That was a
strong argument to gaine attention. And in this fourth verse, he
argueth with and urgeth *Job*, to give him attention, because he
was a man of Gods making, as *Job* also was. The same hand
wrought them both, and therefore, why should there be a strange-
nesse between them? or an unwillingness to give or receive
counsel and helpe from one another?

Vers. 4. *The spirit of God hath formed me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*

I shall open these words two wayes.

First, As a direct proposition, or assertion.

Secondly, In their connection and dependance; as they are
here used, for an argument of perswasion.

First, Consider the Text, as an assertion; *The spirit of God hath made me, &c.* The word doth not signifie barely to make, or to clap up a worke any how, but to make with art, to make skilfully, to compose and fashion a thing with exactest grace, comeliness, and beauty. Thus are we made by the Spirit of God. Man is an excellent piece of worke, yea man is the Master-piece

*Faci-
endi verbum
artificiosum &
elaboratum a-
gendi rationem
affert. Pined.*

of all the visible workes of God. *The Spirit of God hath made me.*

There are two things here to be enquired ; First, what we are to understand by the Spirit of God, to whom *Elihu* attributes his making. Secondly, Why doth *Elihu* attribute his making to the Spirit of God ? To the former question, I answer ; First, negatively, that by the Spirit of God we are not to understand a power or vertue put forth by God, in which sense we sometimes read the Spirit of God in Scripture. But by the Spirit of God here, we are to understand God the Spirit. In which sense we read (*Gen: 1. 2.*) *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.* As also (*Math: 3. 16.*) *He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him ;* that is , upon Jesus Christ, baptized by *John* in *Jordan*.

The second question is, Why doth *Elihu* attribute his making to the Spirit of God ? Regeneration or our new-making is properly the work of the Spirit, but is Creation, or our naturall constitution his work also ? Saith not *Moses* ? (*Gen: 2. 7.*) *The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the earth ;* *Jehovah Elohim* formed man. And if we look into the first of *John* ver: 2, 3: we read thus ; *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God ; the same was in the beginning with God, all things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made, that was made.* There our maker (for the making of all things is attributed to him) is the Son, the second person in the holy Trinity, or the *Word*, who (as it followeth in that Chapter) *was made flesh.* Why then doth *Elihu* here ascribe his making to the Spirit ? And how are these Scriptures reconciled ?

I answer, By that received *Maxime* in Divinity, *The workes of the holy Trinity towards the creature are undivided.* So that, while this Scripture ascribes the making of man to the Spirit or Third person in the Trinity, it doth not at all crosse those which ascribe it to the first or second, the Father or the Son. *The Spirit of God hath made me.*

Hence note.

First, *Man as to his bodily making, or the making of his body, is the workmanship of God.*

As we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus to good (or holy)

holy) *workes*, (Eph: 2. 10.) so we are his workmanship created to common and naturall workes. We have heard of that divine consultation or resolution rather (Gen: 1. 26.) *Let us make man*: The Father made man, and the Son made man, and the holy Spirit made man; The Father by the Son, through the holy Spirit made man. What a glorious, what a mighty power is put forth for the production of such a poore creature as man is! And this is true, not only of the first man in his creation, but of every man since the creation, there is a concurrence of a divine power and workmanship in the setting up of man as man. (Psal: 100. 3.) *It is he that made us, and not we our selves*; God doth not only make us holy men, but he makes us men. Hence David (Psal: 13. 9-14.) *I am fearefully, and wonderfully made*. He speaks there of the frame of his body, though that be much more true in reference to the admirable frame of the new creature which is set up in the soule; so, indeed we are fearefully and wonderfully made. (Isa: 27. 11.) *This is a people of no understanding* (But did God ever make a people without naturall understanding? Surely no, but they were a people without spirituall understanding, they did not understand what the mind, and meaning of God was, and what their owne duty was; Such are a people of no understanding, how wise soever they are in their owne eyes, or in the eyes of the world; what followeth) *Therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour*; That is, God who made and formed them, both in their naturall capacity as men, as also in their civill and spirituall capacity as a Church and Nation, or as a Nationall Church (understanding it of the *Jewes*) will not have mercy on them, will not favour them. We read the same Church at once looking to God as their maker and most earnestly moving and imploring his pity upon the same account. (Isa: 64. 8, 9.) *But now O Lord, thou art our father, we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand*; As if they had sayd, Thou O Lord, hast moulded us as thy creatures, and fashioned us as thy Church, when we were but a rude masse or heape without forme or comeliness, therefore doe not marre thy owne worke, doe not breake the vessels of thine owne making, or as it followeth in the same Chapter, *Be not wroth very sore O Lord; neither remember iniquity for ever, behold, we beseech thee, we are all thy people*.

Hence consider.

First, That, we owe not only our well-being, but our very being unto God. And therefore

Secondly, No man ought to looke upon himselfe as his owne; So the Apostle argues (1 Cor: 6. 19.) *Know ye not that your body is the temple of the holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your owne*; No man is his owne, he is Gods, who hath made him. Saints and believers especially are not their own in that respect; as also because their bodies *are the temple of the holy Ghost*; that is, the holy Ghost hath sanctified them for himselfe, for his peculiar service, and for his habitation. Now as the bodies of Saints are the temple of the holy Ghost, because he doth sanctifie them; so they are the temple of the holy Ghost, because he hath reared them up, and built them. That consideration should urge us to duty; our bodies are temples built, as well as temples sanctified by the holy Ghost; And therefore we are not our owne at all, nor in any respect; and if we are not our owne at all, but the Lords, then we ought to be alwayes for the Lord.

Hence, Thirdly, Hath *the Spirit of God* made us? (as *Elihu* saith) then let the Spirit use us; how sad is it, that when the Spirit of God hath made our bodies and soules, we should let the wicked spirit use either (as he doth both the bodies and soules of carnall men) to his base services. The evill spirit did neither make your bodies nor your soules, why should he have the command of either? Therefore *as your members have been weapons of unrighteousnesse to sin, so let them be instruments of righteousness unto God*. Seeing the holy Spirit hath made us, let not the evill spirit use so much as a little finger of us; for, he hath not made not only so much as a little finger of our hand, but so much as the least haire of our heads (as Christ saith we our selves cannot, *Math: 5. 36.*) *white or blacke*. And therefore let not the evill spirit make use of one haire of our heads white or black, as a flagge of pride and vanity, or to be an occasion of sin to others. He that maketh the house ought to have the possession and service of it, either to dwell in it himselfe, or to receive rent and profit from him that dwells in it. The spirit having made us, should not only have the rent and revenue, but the full possession of us for ever. That which is of God should be for God, for him alwayes, and only for him.

Se-

Secondly, In that the making of man is attributed to the Spirit.

Observe.

The Spirit of God is God.

The holy Ghost is not only a power of God, or a word gone out from God, but the holy Ghost is God. This is cleare from the efficiency of the holy Spirit; *The Spirit of God hath made me.* The work of creation is attributable to none but God. That power which at first set up man in his creation, continueth him to this day; this power and great prerogative is given to the Spirit; therefore the Spirit is God. (*Psal. 33. 6.*) *By the word of the Lord* (his substantiall Word or Son) *were the heavens made, and all the host of them, by the breath* (or Spirit) *of his mouth;* that is, *Jehovah* by his Eternall Son and Spirit made all things. The heavens and their host, are there expressed by a *Synecdoche* of the part, for the whole creation, or, for all creatures both in heaven and in earth. Againe (*Psal. 104. 30.*) *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created;* The Spirit of God creates every day; what is it that continueth things in their created being, but providence? That's a true axiome in Divinity; *Providence is creation continued;* Now the Spirit of God who created at first, creates to this day; *Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created.* The work of creation was finished in the first six dayes of the world, but the work of creation is renewed every day, and so continued to the end of the world. Successive providentiall creation as well as originall creation is ascribed to the Spirit.

The Scripture is full of arguments to prove that the holy Ghost is God; Which (because this fundamentall truth is blasphemously spoken against) I shall a little touch upon.

First, As the Spirit createth and makes the naturall man consisting of body and soule, so he regenerateth (which is a greater creation) the whole into a spirituall man; therefore he is God. (*John 3. 5.*) *Except a man be borne againe of water, and of the Spirit* (that is, of the Spirit who is as water) *he cannot enter into the kingdome of God.* The holy Ghost is also call'd, *The sanctifier;* sanctification is regeneration in progress, and motion; regeneration is sanctification begun; and sanctification is regeneration per-

perfecting from day to day. (2 Thes: 2. 13.) *We are bound to give thanks to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and beliefe of the truth.* And the Apostle Peter writes to the *Elect* (1 Pet: 1. 2.) *according to the foreknowledge of God the father, through sanctification of the Spirit.* Now, who can doe these great things but God? who can regenerate, or give a new nature, who can sanctifie or perfect that new nature but God alone? Men and Angels must let these workes alone for ever, or (as we translate, *Psal: 49. 8.*) these acts cease for ever from men and Angels, as much as the redemption of man from the grave, or from hell, from corruption, or condemnation.

Secondly, The Spirit is omniscient, *He knoweth all things,* (1 Cor: 1. 12. 2. 10. 19.) *The Spirit knoweth all things, yea the deep things of God.* He is not only acquainted with, and privie to the surface and outside of things, but he searcheth things to the bottom of them. Nor doth he search only the deepe or bottome things of common men, or of the chiefeft of men, Kings and Princes, (whose hearts are usually as much deeper then other mens, as their persons and places are higher) but the Spirit searcheth the deep things, the bottome things of God, the things of God that lye lowest, and most out of sight, the Spirit understandeth; therefore the Spirit is God. For (as the Apostle argueth, 1 Cor: 2. 11.) *No man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man that is in him; even so the things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God,* or, he that is God; if the spirit that is in man, were not man, or the intellectuall power in man, it could never know the things of man; and if the Spirit of God were not God, he could never search and know the deep, the deepest things of God.

Thirdly, As the Spirit of God knoweth all things, as he searcheth the deep things, even all the secrets, and mysteries of God; so he teacheth all things, even all those secrets and mysteries of God, which 'tis needful or useful for man to know. The Spirit is a teacher, and he teacheth effectually (*Joh: 16. 13.*) *When the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himselfe* (that is, he shall not teach you a private doctrine; or that which is contrary to what ye have learned of me)

but

but whatsoever he shall heare, that shall he speake, and he will shew you things to come. Which last words are

A fourth argument that he is God. As the Spirit teacheth, so he foretelleth all things (*1 Tim: 4. 1.*) Now the Spirit speaketh expressely, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devills. The Spirit of God clearly foreseeth and infallibly foretelleth what shall be, before it is, therefore he is God. The Lord by his holy Prophet (*Isa: 41. 23.*) challengeth all the false Idol gods of the Heathen to give that prooffe of their Divinity; *Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are Gods.* As if he had sayd, Doe that and we will yield the cause. Men and Devills may guesse at, but none can indeed shew things to come but God.

Fifthly, The Spirit appoints to himselfe officers and ministers in the Church, therefore he is God, (*Acts 13. 2.*) *The holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*

Sixthly, The holy Ghost furnisheth those Officers whom he calleth with power and gifts, as he pleaseth, that they may be fit for the work or ministry of the Gospel (*1 Cor: 12. 8. 11.*) *To one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit, &c. But all these worketh that one, and the selfe-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.* Now, who can give wisdom and knowledge, who can give them prerogatively, following in this distribution, or division of gifts, no rule, nor giving any other reason of it but his owne will, except God only?

Seventhly, The holy Ghost is sinned against; therefore he is God. Some, possibly may object and say, This is not a convincing or demonstrative argument, that the holy Ghost is God, because he is sinned against; For man may sin against man. All second table sins are sins against our Neighbour; and the Apostle tells the *Corinthians* (*1 Ep: 8. 12.*) that while they used their lawfull liberty in eating with offence, they *sinned against the Brethren.* I answer, Whosoever is properly sinned against is God, because God is the Law-giver. And, though many actions of men are direct wrongs to man, yet in every wrong done to man, God also is wronged; and, in strict sence, he only is sinned against by man. For the reason why any action is a wrong to man, is because it is against

against some Law of God. And if to be sinned against in strict sence, be proper to God only ; then the argument stands good, that the Holy Spirit is God, because he is sinned against ; especially, if we consider, that there is such an Emphasis put upon sinning against the holy Ghost in the holy Scripture (more if possible then upon sinning against the Father, or the Son) (*Math. 12. 31.*) *Wherefore, I say unto you (saith Christ) All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men ;* As if he had said, Though you sin against the Father, and the Son, it shall be forgiven you, but if you sin against the holy Ghost it shall not be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come ; that is, it shall never be forgiven. Seeing then there is more in sinning against the holy Ghost then against the Father, or the Son, who are God, the holy Ghost must needs be God. For though there is no degree or graduall difference in the deity, each person being coeternall, coequall, and consubstantiall ; yet the Scripture attributes more in that case, as to the poynt of sinning against the holy Ghost, then to sinning against the Father, or the Son ; therefore certainly the holy Ghost is God.

Lastly, The holy Ghost is the object of divine worship ; are not we baptized *in the Name of the Father, Son, and holy Ghost* ? Is the Father, and the Son God, and the holy Ghost not God, who is joynd with them in the same honour ? Shall a creature come in competition with God ? And doth not the Scripture or word of God, direct us to pray for grace from the Spirit as well as from the Father or the Son ? (*2 Cor. 13. 13. Rev. 1. 4.*) Thus we see how full the Scripture is in giving the glory of the same workes upon us, and of the same worship from us to the Spirit, as to the Father and the Son : And therefore from all these premises we may conclude, That the Holy-Ghost with the Father and the Son, is God blessed and to be glorified for evermore. *The Spirit of God hath made me,*

And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.

רוח
Spiritus ex ore
egregiens, hali-
tus flatus ani-
ma proprie sig-
nificat halitem,
per metonymi-

The words carry an allusion (as Interpreters generally agree) to that of *Moses* describing the creation of man (*Gen. 2. 7.*)

And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrills the breath of life, and man became a living

ving soule. *Elihu* speakes neere in the same forme, fully to the same effect; *The breath of the Almighty hath given me life*, or, *enlivened me*; As if he had sayd, That soule which the Lord hath breathed into me, hath made me live. The soule of man may be called the breath of the Almighty, because the Almighty is expressed infusing it into man at first by breathing. And therefore the word *Neshamah*, which properly signifies the breath, doth also by a Metonymie of the effect signifie the soule it selfe which causeth breathing. Thus our translators render it (*Isa: 57. 16.*) *I (saith the Lord) will not contend for ever, neither will I be alwayes wroth, for the spirit should faile before me, and the soules which I have made.* As the soule of man was breathed in by God, so the soule is that by which man breathes. Breath and soule come and goe together. Some comparing the originall word (*Shamaijm*) for the heavens, with this word (*Neshamah*.) which here we translate *breath*, take notice of their neere affinity, intimating that the soule of man is of a heavenly pedigree, or comes from heaven; yea the latine word (*mens*) signifying the *mind*, is of the same consonant letters with the Hebrew *Neshamah*, and, as some conceive, is derived from it.

So then, I take these words, *The breath of the Almighty*, as a description of that part of man which is opposed to his body; *The Spirit of God hath made me*; that is, hath set me up as a man, in humane shape, *And the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*; that is, this soule which the Almighty hath breathed into me, hath made me a living man, ready for any humane act, or (as *Moses* speakes) *God breathing into my nostrills the breath of life, I became a living soule.*

Hence observe.

First, *The soule of man floweth immediately from God.*

'Tis the breath of God; not that God liveth by breathing; the way of his life is infinitely above our apprehension; But 'tis cleare in Scripture, That the Almighty breathed into man the powers of life. And therefore he is called (by way of Eminence) *The father of spirits*, (*Heb: 12. 9.*) For though the Almighty is rightly entituled the Father of the whole man, though both body and soule are the worke of God, yet he is in a further sence, the father of our spirits, or soules, then of our bodyes. And here

Solomon shewing how man is disposed of when these two are separated by death, saith (*Ecc̃l: 12. 7.*) *Then shall the dust* (that is, the body) *returne to the earth as it was, and the spirit* (that is, the soule) *shall returne to God who gave it.* The body is the gift of God, but the body is not the breath of God, it is not such an immediate gift of God as the soule is; when the body of man was made at first, God tooke the dust of the earth and formed his body out of it, but when he gave him a soule, he breathed that from himselfe; it was an immediate effect of Gods power, not dealing with, nor working upon any præ-existing matter. The spirit or soule of man is purely of God, solely of God. And hence we may inferre.

First, Then the soule is not a vapour, arising from the crasis or temperament of the body, as the life of a beast is.

Secondly, Then the soule of man is not traduced from the parents in generation, as many learned men affirme, especially, to ease themselves of those difficulties about the conveyance of originall sin or defilement into the soule.

Thirdly, We may hence also inferre, then the soule is not corruptible; it is an immortall substance. How can that be corruptible or mortall, which hath its rise (as I may say) immediately from God, or is breathed in by the Almighty, who is altogether incorruptible and immortal. And whereas there is a two-fold incorruptibility; First, by divine ordination, that is, God appoynts such a thing shall not corrupt, and therefore it doth not; so the body of man in it's first creation was incorruptible, for though it were in it selfe corruptible, being made out of the earth, yet by the appoyntment of God, if man had continued in his integrity he had not dyed. And therefore it is said, *By sin came death*; yea doubtlesse if God should command and appoynt the meanest worme that moves upon the earth to live for ever, or the most fading flower that groweth out of the earth to flourish for ever, both the one and the other would doe so. Secondly, there is an incorruptibility in some things, not meerely by a law or appoyntment of God, but as from that intrinsecall nature, which God hath bestowed upon them, and implanted in them. Thus the Angels are immortall, they have an incorruptible nature, and likewise the soule of man, being breathed from the Almighty, is in it's owne nature incorruptible; it hath naturally

no feedes of dissolution in it, because no contrariety, no contrary qualities in it, as all bodies or corporeall substances have. I know the Apostle saith (1 Tim: 6. 16.) *God only hath immortality*; it's true, he only hath it in himselfe independently, originally; but he derives and gives it as a talent to some creatures in a way of dependance upon himselfe.

Secondly, Observe.

The soule brings in the life of the body, The life of man.

What is the body without the soule, but a lump of clay; As soone as ever the soule departs, life departs, man dyeth and becomes a putrifying carcase; yet such is the folly of man, that all their care is for the life of the body, which is (as it is) a dying life, they utterly neglect the soule, which, as it is the life of the body, so it selfe never dyeth. The soule is the Jewell, the body is but the Cabinet, the soule is the kernel, the body is but the shell. Will you be solicitous, about a Cabinet, and a shell, and slight the Jewel, or throw away the kernel? Will you take care of that which liveth, the body, and will you not take care of that which holds your life, the soule?

Againe, Note.

Life is the gift of God.

If the soule which is the cause of life in man, be of God, then the life of man is of God also. The cause of the cause is the cause of the effect or thing caused. But we need not argue it from Logick rules, Scripture testimony being so abundant in this thing. (Acts 17. 25.) *He giveth to all, life and breath, and all things.* And (v. 28.) *In him we live and move and have our being.* Spirituall and eternall life, are the gift of God, so also is naturall life. And if so, Then

First, Live to God; Secondly, Seeing God gives us life, we should be willing to give our lives to God. Yea Thirdly, We should therefore be ready to give up, or rather to lay downe our lives for God. And as we should give up our lives to God when he calls for them by natural death, so we should give up our lives for God, when he calls us to beare witness to his name and truth by violent death.

I shall yet take notice of one thing further, before I passe from

this verse ; *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life.*

Some, upon good grounds, referre the first clause ; *The Spirit of God hath made me*, to the creation both of soule and body ; and the second or latter clause , *the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*, to that quickning which we receive by the Spirit to the duties whereinto we are called in this life. The breath of the Almighty hath given me life ; that is, hath fitted and prepared me for the severall offices and services of life. As if *Elihu* had sayd, *The Spirit of God hath not only made me a man, but a man for worke, yea the Spirit of God hath quickned me to the*

work and businesse I am come about. Thus, life imports not onely spirituall life in the being of it, but all the furniture, ornaments, and abilities of a spirituall life. The Septuagint render this profession made by *Elihu* expressly, to this sence, holding out a strong assurance which *Elihu* had, that God had both called and prepared him for the service he was come about and engaged in. *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath instructed me.* Another of the Greek Interpreters speaks as much ; *I am not ignorant, that of my selfe I am able to doe nothing, but I have received this power from God ;* As if *Elihu* had said, *The Spirit of the Almighty hath quickned me to this worke I am now upon, and taught me what both to say and doe in thy case, O Job.*

πνεῦμα δὲ τοῦ
θεοῦ πνεῦμα
δὲ τοῦ θεοῦ
με. Spiratio
omnipotentis
est quæ docet
me. Sept:
Haud me latet
non a meipso,
sed a deo hunc
prudentiæ sen-
sum me accē-
pisse. Nicet:

Hence note.

God giveth not only the life of nature unto men, but he fits them for all the duties, and services of this life.

We, indeed, are scarcely to be reckoned among the living, if we have no more but a naturall life ; what is it to be able to eate and drinke, to heare, and see, and speake ; unlesse we have more then this, we deserve not to be numbred or written among the living ; we are upon the matter, but dead lumps, and clods of clay. It is the breath of the Almighty that quickens us and superadds ability to doe good ; that frames, fashions, and fits us for every good word, and worke ; *This is the life of man* ; when a man is fitted for duty, and service, when he is furnished for imployment, to stand God, and his Brethren in some stead while he is in this world, then he lives. The motions, impulses and influences,

ences, the teachings and guidings of the Spirit of God, are the life of our lives. We can doe nothing of our ſelves, till the Almighty beſtows a new life upon us ; and as we can doe nothing at all in ſpirituals, till he gives us a new life, ſo we can doe nothing to purpoſe till the Spirit acts & ſtirres up that life in us. It is the Spirit who firſt beſtows; Secondly, encreaſeth; Thirdly, excites our ſpiritual life, & puts the new creature into motion. All our good thoughts and holy actings, all our uprightneſſe and ſincerity, all our ſtrength and ability flow from the Spirit ; untill the holy Spirit workes in us, we ſit ſtill; and when the Spirit worketh, we muſt not ſit ſtill ; *I (ſaith the Apoſtle, Rom: 15. 18.) will not dare to ſpeak of any of thoſe things, which Chriſt hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient by word, and deed ; As if he had ſayd, My owne workes are not worth the naming, I will not ſo much as mention any thing that Chriſt hath not wrought in me by the Spirit ;* That was a mighty worke which he was enabled to doe, to make the Gentiles obedient in word, and deed. Chriſt did not leave him to doe it in his owne power. The breath of the Almighty enabled him ; and ſo he doth all thoſe that are able and willing, ready for and ſucceſſefull in any ſuch holy worke.

Let us therefore aſcribe all to his working and quickening ; let us ſet down our ſeverall Items of receit in our account-books, confeſſing that we have nothing of our own. This gift, that grace, that ability to doe, to ſpeake, to ſuffer, to act, we have received from him. Let the whole Inventory of our ſoules riches, have Gods name written upon it, and aſcribed to his praiſe alone. And if we thus uncloath our ſelves, by giving God the glory of all, we ſhall looſe nothing by it, for God will apparrell and furniſh us, deck and adorne us better every day. The poorer we are in our ſelves, the richer will he make us. To be thus diminith't is the beſt way to our encrease. 'Tis the breath of the Almighty that teacheth us, and if we can but humbly enough, that is, heartily acknowledge it, we ſhall be taught and learne enough.

So much of theſe words as they are a direct aſſertion. I ſhall conſider them a little in their connection, and reference both to what went before, and to that which follows after ; which was the ſecond conſideration of this verſe at firſt propoſed,

Fiſt, This verſe may be connected with the three former verſes, and then the ſence appeareth thus ; As if *Elihu* had ſayd,

O Job, I have moved thee to heare me patiently, and attentively, and let it not seeme grievous to thee to doe soe; For, though I am thy inferiour in age, and degree, yet I am a man as well as thou, and I have a soule and body like thine, yea the Spirit of God that made me, hath also furnished me; I have received ability from God as thou hast, I stand upon even ground, or equall termes with thee, as to creation, and I am not altogether voyd of instruction; and therefore as a man I have a possibility to understand reason; and as a man indowed by the Spirit of God, I have a capability to direct thee about the wayes of God, or how to understand and comport with his providences towards thee. Thou hast been long under the hand of God, and long in the hands of men, who have rather entangled and troubled thy mind then eased it; who knowes but that I, who all this while have been but a looker on, may see somewhat in thy case, which hath hitherto been hid from thy former undertakers. Therefore pray favour me (it may prove in the issue a favour to thy selfe) with an houre or two of patient attention. Take this note from it.

The consideration of our common originall, that we have all one maker, or are all come out of the hand of God, should make us willing to heare, and learne of one another.

Thus Elihu argueth; Heare me; why? Because the Spirit of God hath made me, as well as thee; doe not despise what I have to say, as if you were a man of another mould, or pedigree, the same God, out of the same matter, by the same Word, and Spirit, hath form'd us both. Some pictures are more highly prized then others of the same person, because drawne by a better hand, by An Apelles, or A Michael Angelo. The same of the Artist or workman puts a value upon the worke; And the title of the Author doth sometimes commend a piece more then, in truth, either the forme or matter. But come among the sons of men, all their faces and features are drawne by one hand; The same most exact hand of God hath wrought and fashioned them all, both as to their outside, and inside, both as to the forme of these houses of clay, and as to all the ornaments and beautifyings of them. As we all walke upon the same earth, drinke out of the same water, breath in the same ayre, as we are all covered with the same Canopy of heaven, and lighted with the same Sun, so we are all made

made with the same hand ; The Spirit of God hath made one as well as another ; This man hath not had a better pēcill nor a more skilfull Limner then that. Thus we may argue from the common condition of man in nature, to a mutuall condescension among men. Indeed Christians, who have higher principles, have also higher topicks & arguments then that, why they should condescend one to another ; and (as the Apostle directs, *Eph: 4. 4, 5, 6.*) *Keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.* Saints should be lowly and meeke with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love, (as the Apostle there exhorts) not only because one hand hath made all their bodyes, but because they are one body ; though they are many naturall bodyes, yet one mysticall body ; *There is one body, and one spirit* ; As one Spirit hath made them, so they are made one spirit ; *There is also* (as it followeth) *one hope, one Lord, one faith, one Baptisme, one God, and father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.* How should all Saints be one, who are comprehended and united under this seven-fold oneness. That we have all one maker in nature, is a very moving argument to meekness, love, and unity, but that all believers are made one by Grace, is a much more moving argument.

Againe, We may consider these words in connexion with the three following verses, and then, as in connection with the former, they are a prevention of *Job's* pride, so in this, they are a prevention of his feare, or an encouragement of him to a chearfull hearing of what *Elihu* had to say. *Job* had been dealt severely with by his three friends, and the terror of God was upon him, he was under much dispondency of spirit. Now (saith *Elihu*) *Answer me if thou canst, stand up, set thy words in order before me, for the Spirit of God hath made me, and given me life ; I am a creature, and I am but a creature ; I am no more then thou art, I am made of God, and thou art made of God as well as I, I was made out of the dust, as thou art ; I am not God to terrifie thee, but I am sent of God, to counsel and comfort thee ; my hand shall not be heavie upon thee, I promise to deale tenderly with thee, I am such a one as thy selfe, as I am not worse, so I am not better, we stand alike together in this dispute ; therefore thou mayest freely come forth, and answer me, who am but a poore creature, as thy selfe is.* Thus *Elihu* bespeakes *Job* in the sixth and seventh verses ; *If thou canst*
answer

answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up, Behold, I am according to thy wish. Speake freely, and cleare thy selfe, if thou art able, thou hast free leave for me.'

Verf. 5. *If thou canst answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up:*

This verse may have a four-fold respect.

First, To the insufficiency, or incompetency of *Job's* parts and intellectuals to deale with *Elihu* in this matter; as if they were a daring challenge, Answer me if thou canst, doe thy worst. And hence some of the Ancients charge *Elihu*, as if he came upon *Job* boastingly, and spake thus in the pride of his owne spirit, and in the disdain of *Job*, at once to shew and slight his weaknesse, *If thou canst answer me.* As if (like some irrefragable Doctour) he had said; *I shall speak such reason, as I know thou canst not answer; doe what thou canst, set all thy wits aworke, and beate thy braines as much as thou wilt, thou wilt but loose thy labour, and weary thy selfe in vaine.* Thus the meaning of, *Answer me if thou canst,* is, *Thou canst not answer.* But I suppose *Elihu*, (though hot spirited enough) was yet of a better spirit & temper then to speak either thus proudly of himselfe, or despisingly of so worthy a man as he had before him; nor did *Elihu* look upon *Job* as such a puny to him, or so much his underling as that he durst not hold up the Bucklers in dispute against him. *Elihu* knew *Job* was an old experienced Souldier, well ver'd in the wayes and things of God. And therefore

Secondly, (*If thou canst*) may rather referre to the weaknesse and soarenesse of *Job's* body, to the wounds or troubles which he had received and felt from the Almighty in his spirit, then to any inability of his mind for argument. As if *Elihu* had said; *I consider how it is with thee, thou art a man diseased and distempered in thy body, fitter to lye upon or keep thy bed, then to stand up to a dispute, fitter for a hospitall then for the Schooles. Thou also hast a troubled and an afflicted spirit, I doubt thou art not in case to answer me, or to stand up longer in a way of dispute; but this I say, if thou canst answer me, pray doe: set thy words in order before me. I will not lay this burden upon thee, unlesse thou art willing to take it, unlesse thou findest thou hast strength and spirit to beare*

beare and carry it through. Answer me if thou canst, otherwise I will speak my thoughts out, and make what use of it thou pleasest.

Thirdly, I conceive *Elihu* might here intend to let *Job* understand, that he was resolved to put him to the utmost, that he was resolved to bring the strongest arguments, and use the quickest way of reasoning for his conviction that he could; and that therefore he also adviseth *Job* to doe the like, to doe his best, to bucktle himselfe to the businesse with all his might, for he was not come to dally with him: he would have him set his shoulders to the work, and gather all the forces of his soule to the battaile, he bids him bring forth even his horsemen for his defence (as I may speak in allusion to that in the 12th of *Jeremy*; *If thou hast run with footmen, and they have wearied thee, how shalt thou contend with horses*.) *Elihu* was purposed and resolved to bring out his greatest strength, his horsemen to the battaile, and therefore wisheth *Job* doe so too. Thus he gives him faire warning, *If thou canst, answer me; doe thy utmost, I am ready for thee.*

Fourthly, While *Elihu* saith, *If thou canst, answer me, set thy words in order before me, stand up.* We may take his words as a gentle and sweete invitation to the worke; As if he had sayd, *If thou hast spirits enow left to hold discourse with me, or to reply upon me, come friend, spare me not; set thy words in order before me, I will not be a terror to thee.* Or there may be this condescending sence in these words of *Elihu*; *Doe not thinke (O Job) because I begin to speak, that therefore I meane to speak all, or to have all the discourse my selfe; assure thy selfe, I have no purpose to hinder thee in any defence whch thou art able to make for thy selfe: No, though I am come with my best preparations to urge thee, and reply upon thee, as to all that hath past between thee and thy friends, yet I am as willing that thou shouldst answer, as I am ready prepared and prest to speake; thou hast free leave to make thy Apologie, to say what thou canst for thy selfe, I intend not to impose upon thee, nor by any Authority to compell thee to stand to my sentence, as if I were thy Master, or would Lord it over thee; Doe and speake thy best for thy owne vindication, I am ready to receive it from thee, and give thee a faire account of my thoughts about it. If thou canst, answer me,*

Set thy words in order before me.

'Tis a metaphorical speech, often and most properly used for
A a the

the marſhalling of an Army; and ſo is elegantly applyed here in this matter of controverſie, or polemick diſcourſe. *Set thy words*, thy reaſons, thy arguments, as it were in battaile aray againſt me; we had the word in the former Chapter at the 14th verſe. It is applyed alſo to the exactneſs of the heart in prayer, not an affected exactneſs or curioſity about words, or to word it with God, but it notes exactneſs or ſpiritualneſs rather in meditating and diſpoſing the ſtrongest Scripture reaſonings, to prevaile with God in prayer. Prayer is, as it were, a battaile fought in heaven, not in wroth or revenge, but with faith and holy ſubmiſſion. Thus did *Jacob* when he wraſtled with the Angel, (*Gen: 32.*) And thus *David* ſpeaks (*Pſal: 5. 3.*) *In the morning I will direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up, or, I will marſhall my prayer*, I will bring up petition after petition, pleading after pleading, even till I am become like *Jacob* a Prince with God, till I have won the field, and got the day. Thus the word is applyed by a metaphor both to diſputations with men, and ſuppliations to God. Further, we may take the meaning plainly without any ſtraine of rhetorique, *Set thy words in order before me*. Methode is good in every thing, either an expreſſe or a covert methode. Sometimes 'tis the beſt of art to cover it; in ſpeaking there is a ſpeciall uſe of methode; for, though, as one ſaid very well (ſpeaking of thoſe who are more curious about methode, then ſerious about matter) *Methode never converted any man*; yet methode and the ordering of words, is very uſe-full. Our ſpeeches ſhould not be heaps of words, but words bound up, not a throng of words, but words ſet in aray, or, as it were, in ranke and file. The Prophet (*Joel 2. 5.*) deſcribes a terrible Judgement of God *by a ſtrong people ſet in battaile aray*. In purſuance of which ſence, Mr *Broughton* renders the next words, not (as we) *ſtand up*, but *ſtand to it*, as Commanders ſay to their Souldiers, *ſtand to it*; and the *Italian* tranſlation thus; *Set thy words in order before me, preſent thy ſelfe to the Combate*. Thus he continues the metaphor; As if he had ſaid; *Chufe thy ground, and maintaine it like a valiant Champion*; *I doe not deſire thou ſhouldeſt yeild me an inch of ground, yeild to nothing but the truth, diſpute every patch with me, ſtand up, ſtand to it*; ſtand as if thou wert to fight a battaile, not only for thy honour, but for thy life. The Apoſtle (*1 Cor: 16. 13.*) ſpeaks in that language about:

Sta quaſi in acie, ad pugnam dum contra me & convincendum me ratio- nibus. Druf:

about our spirituall warre; *Watch ye, stand fast, quit your selves & dispute like men; man it, be strong.* There is such a sence in *Elihu's* exhortation here to *Job*; *Set thy words in order before me, stand up.*

Now, in that *Elihu* when he was thus bent to speak, and was so full of matter to speak, that as he tells us in the former chapter, *He was like bottles of wine, and that he could not hold, yet gave Job faire law, and bids him answer, if he could.*

Note First.

In all matters of difference we should be as willing to heare what others can answer, as we are desirous that others should heare what we can object.

If thou canst, answer me. It is good to speak in a right cause, especially to speak rightly, and it is very good to learne what can be answered.

Note.

Secondly, *Elihu* looking upon *Job* as a man in a weake condition, speaks encouragingly, *stand up*; as much as to say, *Take heart.*

It is our duty to refresh those that are troubled, or to comfort those that are weake, whether in body or in minde.

We should doe our best to put strength and infuse spirits into sinking hearts and fainting spirits. Thus *God dwells* (Isa: 57. 51. and so should we) *with him that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

Thirdly, As these words, *If thou canst, answer me*, import that as *Elihu* intended to put *Job* to the utmost, so he would have *Job* bestirre himselfe to the utmost.

Hence note.

Every man should doe his best for the clearing or maintaining of a good and righteous cause.

'Tis sinfull to be slight in matters of moment. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe, doe it with all thy might* (saith *Solomon*, Eccles: 9. 10.) we should especially doe these two things with all our might; First, maintaine the truth of *God*; Secondly, our

owne integrity. The former of theſe was chiefly upon the hand of *Elihu* in this undertaking, the latter upon the hand of *Job*. To betray the truth of God, is the worſt kinde both of cowardiſe and treachery; and to betray our owne Integrity is next to that. There is nothing more unworthy a man, much more a Chriſtian, then to leave either truth, or our own integrity to ſinke or ſwim, to ſhift for themſelves. Thus *Elihu* provokes *Job* to the combat, and ſends him a friendly challenge, which left he ſhould reſuſe or not accept, he gives him a comfortable account (as a cordiall) what manner of man he ſhould find him to be, even a man moulded and modell'd to his owne heart, or minted to his mind, as will appeare in the next verſe.

Verſ. 6. *Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead, &c.*

Here we have a very winning argument (as was ſhewed in opening the whole Context) to encourage *Job* both to heare and answer. If ever a man will ſpeak when he comes to a buſineſſe, it is when things and perſons are according to his wiſh. *Job* had oftentimes wiſht that he might be mildly heard by God, & not ſo harſhly dealt with by man; his friends having been ſo over-ſevere and rigorous toward him, that he was even compelled in the bitterneſſe of his ſoule, to cry out, *He that is afflicted, ſhould have pittie from his friends.* Yea, when *Job* wiſht to be heard by God, he, with much earneſtneſſe deprecated his ſeverity, (*Chap: 9. 34. and Chap: 13. 24.*) *Let not thy dread make me afraid.* Thus, *Job* had wiſht for a milde and gentle treatment from all hands. In answer to which deſire *Elihu* preſents himſelfe to him.

Behold, I am according to thy wiſh in Gods ſtead.

Theſe words (*According to thy wiſh*) may have a two-fold interpretation; First, as we render, *according to thy wiſh*, is, according to what thou haſt heretofore ſpoken or drawne out in wiſhes; thou haſt thy vote, thy wiſh, and what wouldeſt thou have more. As if he had ſaid; *O Job, I have heard thee wiſhing ſuch wiſhes, that thou mighteſt be more tenderly handled; that God would not oppreſſe thee with his Majeſty, nor thy friends with their ſeverity. Now thou haſt thy deſire, I doe here promiſe my ſelfe ſuch*

a one to thee as thou hast desired ; For as I will be a faithfull advocate for God, so, I, who am in Gods stead, will not, (as thou hast prayed God would not at the hearing of thy case) be terrible nor dreadfull to thee ; I doubt not but to carry the matter with thee to thy hearts content. I am according to thy wish.

Hence note.

Wee should labour as much as in us lieth to answer the desires and wishes of others in all things lawfull, especially when they are weak and labouring under sore burthens of affliction and infirmity.

It is not good to be crosse-grain'd at any time to our brethren, much lesse at such a time ; some love (as it were) to lie inwart in every businelle, nor is any thing more desireable to them, then to oppose another mans desire. The sweetnesse and ingenuity of these words, *I am according to your wish*, in what I safely may, is seldome heard among brethren. Some indeed are too forward to be according to the wish of others in things that are sinfull. When theeves and murderers say to them, *Come, come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurke privily for the innocent without cause, &c. Cast in your lot among us, let us all have one purse ;* They say, we are according to your wish, we will goe with you. When the prophane say, come run with us into all excessse of riot, to drunkenness and uncleanness, they answer, we are according to your wish, we are for you. It is good to lie crosse to the sinfull desires of men ; but to comply with their honest desires, and to answer every good wish of their soules, is a great part of our goodnesse, and of our fulfilling the law of love : we should strive in that sence, to fall in with every ones wish, and to become all things to all men, both for their edification and consolation. *Behold, I am according to thy wish.*

Secondly, These words are rendred strictly out of the Original thus, *I am according to thy mouth, or measure* ; I am in the same condition and state as thou art. Thus also they are words of encouragement to *Job*, assuring him that he should not be over-power'd, nor borne downe by force. This forme of speaking is used frequently in Scripture, to note the similitude or proportion of things. The *Israelites* (*Exod: 16. 21.*) gathered Manna every morning, *Every man according to his eating*, The Hebrew *סעודתו* *secundum os tuum* is, *sicut tu* is, *sui*. Heb:

Juxta os voti
sui. Heb:
Juxta os ser-
uitij. Heb:

Super os via-
sui. Heb:

is, *Every one did gather to the mouth of his eating*, that is, according to the measure of his eating, such was the measure of his gathering. The Nazarite was to offer according to *the vow which he vowed* (Numb: 6. 21.) The Hebrew is, according to the mouth of his vow. Again 'tis said (Numb: 7. 5.) *Moses was to give the offerings of the Princes of Israel to the Levites, to every man according to his service, or, according to the mouth* (that is, the condition and degree) of his service. Once more, *Solomon* (Prov: 22. 6.) pressing the good and genuine education of children, expresseth it thus; *Train up a child in the way that he should goe*; The Original *upon the mouth of his way*; that is, in such a way as is not only good and honest in it selfe, but most proper and congeniall to the spirit, disposition, and capacity of the child. As children are to be fed with such meates, so to be taught in such a manner as they can most easily and profitably digest. After this manner, or to this sence, *Elihu* speakes to *Job*, *Stand up, I am according to thy mouth or measure*; As if he had said; *God indeed is infinitely above thy measure, But I, who am come to deale with thee in Gods stead, am according to thy mouth or measure, therefore take courage*; one man is like another, the measure of one man is the measure of another. There are I grant, severall differences among men, both as to civills and spiritualls; there are severall graduall and personall differences; but no specificall difference among men; every man is according to the mouth or measure of any other man: in that God only transcends the measure of all men; *My thoughts are not as your thoughts, nor my wayes as your wayes; but look as the heavens are high above the earth, so my thoughts are above your thoughts, and my wayes above your wayes*, saith the Lord (Isa. 55. 8, 9.) But the wayes of one man are like the wayes of other men; and the thoughts of one man are like the thoughts of other men; There is no such transcendency among men; They are all (as men) of one measure, that is, not only finite, but they are all short and narrow; even they who carry the greatest length and breadth among the sons of men. If we consider man with man, as to his finfull condition, so one man is perfectly like another; one man is of the same measure with another; as *Solomon* expresseth it (Prov: 27. 19.) *As in water face answers face, so the heart of man to man*. If man look downe into the water, that face which he seeth in the water is like that

that face which seeth the water. Thus the hearts of the children of men answer one another, heart answers heart, as face answers face : And as man answers man fully, as to naturall sinfulness, so mostly as to naturall abilities, as for those which are acquired, though the difference may be so great that one man may be clearly discerned to excell another, yet that man who excells most, doth not exceed man ; and therefore may be compassed by man. It is said (*Rev. 21. 17.*) That the wall of the new Jerusalem was measured according to the measure of a man, that is, of the Angel. There is one measure of an Angel, and there is another measure of a man ; Angels have a measure above men ; why then doth he say according to the measure of a man, that is, of the Angel ? I answer, he speaks so because the Angel appeared in the shape of a man, to doe that worke. Now as the measure (that is, the Ability) of an Angel is above mans ; So God hath a measure infinitely above both men and Angels. But men are of a measure. *I am according to thy mouth or measure.*

Hence note.

First, *Man and man are of a measure.*

Let us not make a God of any man, no nor an Angel. The Apostle Jude reproves those who had the persons of men in admiration. Men will be lesse to us then was expected, if we expect too much from them ; or more from them, then is meete. For though one man may have a little more height and largeness of parts and gifts, in that which is either acquired or infused, then his neighbour, yet what man is there in the world, but hath his match, & shall finde his measure in some other men ; yea, though some men exceedingly out-goe others, yet their equalls may be found among men, no man out-goes all men. The best of men have but the measure of a man.

Secondly, Take this Caution from it ; *Let no man make a God of himselfe, or look upon himselfe as if he were in his measure beyond all other men.* We are very apt to doe so. And if we have but little more then some others, we are ready to thinke we have more then all others, or to look upon our selves as if we transcended the measure of mankind, and so swell presently with pride and selfe-conceit ; then which nothing is more uncomely or unmanly. Nor a few esteeme themselves so unparell'd in the parts :

parts and beauty of their bodies, that they despise others, and many doe it in reference to the endowments and abilities of their minds; they have such a quicknesse of understanding, such a strength of memory, such a fluency of speech, such a depth of reason, such power of arguing, as they suppose none can match them or measure with them. All such have forgotten that they are but men. Therefore as no man should admire another, so let him not thinke highly of himselfe, let him rather thinke that though possibly there are some below him, yet there may be many, yea a great many more above him, and enow that are upon the same levell with him. *I am according to thy wish or measure, saith Elihu.*

In Gods stead.

Pro deo; erga deum.

But how came *Elihu* to be in Gods stead? had he a Commission from God to undertake *Job*? was he, as I may say, Gods Delegate or Ambassador? did God send him out upon this errand? if not, why did he take so much to himselfe, as to say, *I am according to thy wish in Gods stead?*

Non quod se dei loco illi aut deum illi futurum aut esse dicat, sed quod dei partes & causam sit contra illum defensurus. Ut quia ille cum deo ob eius maiestatem congregari verebatur, offerat se Jobo dei loco illi futurum.
Merc:
Ego iuxta os meum deo. i. e. pro deo, est enim datus favore. Bold:

I cannot say, that *Elihu* had any formall Commission to come out, and appeare in Gods stead, as an Attorny appeares in stead of his Client, or as an Ambassador in the stead of his Prince; But doubtlesse *Elihu* had an equivalent or virtuall Commission, even a mighty impression upon his spirit, by the Spirit of God to doe so; his heart was drawne out secretly, but strongly to stand up and undertake for God, towards the determination of this long continued dispute. *I am* (saith he) *in Gods stead* or place; in that place which if God himselfe should supply, he would be a dread and a terrour to thee. But I a man of like passions as thy selfe, and being here in Gods behalfe, and by his authority, in his name and for his glory to speak unto thee, I shall yet speak according to the measure of a man, and therefore, thou needest not feare that my terrour should make thee afraid, *I am in Gods stead.*

Hence note.

They who speak to others about the things of God, should speak as God, or as put in Gods place and stead.

'Tis enough to make all the Ministers of Christ tremble and cry out in the Apostles words, *Who is sufficient for these things?*

to remember that when they speake to men, they speake in Gods stead. *We* (saith the same Apostle, 2 Cor: 5. 20.) *are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead, be yee reconciled to God.* Thus spake he who had indeed an immediate call and commission from God; and they who have not such an immediate call and commission as he had, yet speaking of or about the things of God; and coming in the name of God, they should speake as placed in Gods stead. And if the Ministers of Christ ought to speake as in Gods stead, then surely they that heare, should heare them as speaking in Gods stead. The Apostle testifies of the *Galatians* (Gal: 4. 14.) *My temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.* Ye received me not only as an Angel or messenger of Christ, but as if Christ had been there in person, so did ye receive me. He gives the same testimony of the *Thessalonians* (1 Thes: 2. 13.) *For this cause also thanke we God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God, which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of man, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that beleewe.* I doe not say, that what every man speaketh about the things of God, is presently to be taken for the word of God, or as if God spake it. But if that be his scope and purpose, if that be his Theame and his businesse, if that be the subject matter and substance of his speech, Then he (as to the body of his speech) is to be lookt upon as uttering the word and minde of God in Gods stead. 'Tis a very great means to advance our profit in hearing the word, when they who speak it are lookt upon as speaking in Gods stead, and not bringing an errand of their owne.

Before I passe from this first clause of the verse, I shall briefly touch two other readings and interpretations of it.

First, thus; *Behold, I am, as if thy mouth were to God*; that is, thou needest not as thou hast wished to goe or addresse to God himselve for the laying open of thy cause, the matter may be done between me and thee, even as if thou hadst spoken to God himselve.

*Ecce ego quasi
esset os tuum
ad deum. Coc:*

Secondly, Some render those latter words not *in Gods stead* as we, But, *in respect of God.* As if he had said, In respect of God, I stand in the same proportion, or upon the same terms with thy

selfe, for he is the God of us both, nor did God make me of any better or more excellent matter then thou art made of; which he fully expresseth in the close of the verse, as it followeth.

I also am formed out of the Clay.

These words are another argument (as was shewed when I gave the prospect of the whole Context) why *Job* should heare *Elihu*; I am in Gods stead indeed, but I am a poore creature, moulded out of the dust, made up of earth, as thou art; *I also am formed out of the Clay*; therefore stand up, answer me, and feare not; answer me and spare not. The highest and holiest that ever dispenced the minde of God, in Gods stead, to his Church and people here on earth, were made of earth, and were formed out of Clay. The Apostle makes that humble confession of himselfe and fellow-Apostles (2 Cor. 4. 6.) *We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power might be of God.* The weakness of the instrument lifts up the glory of the superior agent. They who by commission are the Ministers of God, and so in Gods stead, are yet but, as other men, in their naturall structure and constitution. (*Acts* 10. 26.) when *Cornelius* gave too much respect, a kinde of Adoration to *Peter*, he forbad him, saying, *Stand up, I also am a man.* As if he had said with *Elihu*; I am formed out of the clay as well as thee. There is a respect due to the persons of men, and much more to the Messengers of God, yet too much may soone be given; I will none of that, saith *Peter*; *I also am a man.* So *Paul* and *Barnabas* (*Acts* 14. 15.) when the people were so hightned in their ignorant respects, that they would have sacrificed to them, as Gods, *They rent their cloathes* (as in case of blasphemy) *and ran in among the people, crying out and saying, Sirs, why doe ye these things? We also are men subject to like passions with you, &c.*

קיצת
Excisus.

I am also [*formed*] or as the Hebrew signifies, *Cut out of the Clay.* As the potter cuts off a rude lump of clay from the whole masse of clay before him, to make a vessel of it; so man is cut out of that masse of mankind; for though the birth and originall of man is now by another way, then the first mans was, yet we may all look upon our selves as having the same originall; we are cut out of the clay, and formed out of the dust.

Hence.

Hence note.

For the matter all men have one originall. I also am formed out of Clay.

I have heretofore met with this poynt, and therefore passe it here.

Secondly, From the scope of *Elihu*,

Note.

The consideration of our common condition, should fit us with compassion one to another; much more should it keep us from insulting over one another.

Elihu used this expression, to assure *Job* that he would deale very tenderly with him; What, dost thou think, that I who am a piece of clay will insult over thee, who art as good a piece of clay as I? why should one earthen vessel dash hard upon another? When we are tempted to pride in our selves, let us remember that we are clay, when we are provoked to anger against our brethren, or to any harsh and rigorous dealing with them, let us remember that we also are clay, that our pedigree and our stock is from the dust as well as others. If our feet be but a little fouled, we think our selves somewhat humbled by it, if but a little dirt stick to our shoes, or hang about our cloaths, we are somewhat ashamed of our selves, yet the truth is, we are all dust, all clay, all mire, we are nothing as to our bodyes, but a little living dust and breathing clay, why then should we be lifted up in high thoughts of our selves? I might hence also give a third note; 'Tis a common Theame, but of important usefulness.

Man is a very fraile creature, he is clay.

But having had occasion to speak to this also heretofore, I shall not stay upon it. Only consider, that, as man is clay, so he is returning to clay, yea turning into clay. We are but a little well compacted and compounded dust, and we shall ere long crumble into dust. We are every day going back, and shall shortly be gone back to what at first we were. These considerations should wither and nip the buddings of selfe-confidence, and bring down the height of mans spirit; *I also am formed out of the clay.*

We may take notice of one thing farther, *Elihu* speaking here of his own naturall formation, gives it in this stile; *I also am formed out of the clay*. This is a peculiar Scripture-expression, or the proper phrase of the holy Ghost, not of a heathen Author, Poet, or Orator. They at best had only some rude notions about this mystery of mans originall, His formation by the power of God out of the earth. Which may enforme us, that the Saints and people of God in those elder and darker times, were familiarly acquainted with the doctrine of the creation, and knew well how to speake in a Scripture language, though they had not then the written word or Scriptures; For 'tis a question whether these transactions were before the giving of the Law or after; However, they were versed in Scripture truths, and in those formes of speech by which God gave out his minde to their forefathers. Here's Scripture phrase, *I also am formed out of the clay*. And therefore *Elihu*, as sensible of anothers frailty by the experience which he had of his own, subjoyne this Assurance of his respect to *Job's* weaknets in what he should further say.

Gentes enim
hoc de primi
hominis facta
a deo plasmatione
& ex
transformatione
mysterium penitus
ignorarunt.
Bold:

Vers. 7. Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid, neither shall my hand be heavie upon thee.

Veruntamen
miraculum
meum te non
terreat. Vulg:

Vox אִמָּר
terrorem denotat
& saepe illud,
qui infatigabilem
regni, iudicium,
principum
elucet.

Elihu had given *Job* much security already that he would deale fairely with him; and here he gives him a promise for it; As if he had said; *I give thee my hand, I plight thee my truth, that my terror shall not make thee afraid, nor shall my hand be heavie upon thee*. The vulgar translation reads, *my miracles* (or what I will doe in any strange and unusuall way) *shall not terrifie thee*. Indeed miracles haue a kinde of terror in them; But we need not put such a straine upon the Text. The word which we translate *terror*, signifies that which is most terrible and dreadfull to man, even the Magistrates throne, the presence of great Princes; of which *Solomon* saith (*Pro. 20. 28.*) *The King sitting upon the throne, scattereth all evill with his eyes*; that is, with the terrible looks of Majesty which God hath stampd upon him. The Prophet (*Jer. 50. 38.*) useth this word to expresse idols or false Gods by; and he calls them so either in a holy scoone; *O these dumbe idolls which have eyes and see not, eares and heare not, feete and walke not*, are doubtlesse very shrewd and terrible things, are they.

they not? have we not great reason to feare what these doughty Gods will say or doe, who can neither say nor doe any thing? Thus he might call them in a way of scorne: or he calls those Idolls terrible things *Jehim*, from the event, because foolish, vaine, ignorant men, did exceedingly feare them, or were much terrified by them, and God left them to their owne feares and terrors, as he spake by the Prophet (*Isa: 66. 4.*) *I also will chuse their delusions, and bring their feares upon them.* As if he had said, *Because they being vainely deluded, have chosen to feare that which was not to be feared, therefore I also will make this my choyce to bring that upon them which they feared, and hoped to avoyd by following and worshipping Idolls, or by their Idolatrous worship.* Now whereas *Job* was afraid of the terror of the true God, *Elihu*, who presented himselfe in Gods stead, tells him, *my terror shall not make thee afraid.* And we may well conceive, that *Elihu* spake this ironically concerning himselfe; for having sayd before, *I am but a piece of clay*, surely then *my terror cannot make thee afraid.* What terribleness is there in a piece of clay, in a clod of earth? What are the most terrible of the sons of men, that they should be a terror to us? we ought not to trust in the mightiest among men, why then should we feare them, or what need we feare them? *Who art thou* (saith the Prophet, *Isa: 51. 12, 13.*) *that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall dye, and of the son of man that shall be made as Grass?* and forgettest the Lord thy maker. We never feare men unduely, till we doe one of or both these things, either first forget God who made us, or secondly, forget of what other men are made. I am but a piece of clay (saith *Elihu*) what matter of terror can I be to thee I wonder?

*Terror minime
poteſt eſſe in
maſſa luti, quia
li eſt omnis
homo.*

In that *Elihu* giveth *Job* such a promise, *Behold, my terror shall not make thee afraid.*

Note.

Man should shew himſelfe faire and meeke to men, eſpecially to a man in affliction.

It is poſſible for a man, though he be but clay, as another man is, yet to cloath himſelfe, as it were, with terror, yea as the neck of the horſe is ſaid to be clothed (*Job 39. 19.*) *with thunder.* He may put on a kinde of dreadfulneſſe as a Garment, and appeare very formidable to his brother. Some men indeed ap-
peare

peare to men as a Wolfe to a poore sheepe, or as a Beare and Lyon to a Lamb. Though but clay, yet how scaringly doe some men look and Lord it over their brethren! they will rore upon them like a Lion, and rend them like a Beare; clouds and darkness are in their faces, and storme sits upon their browes. There is a terriblenesse of man to man. Thus the holy Prophet (*Isa: 25. 2.*) saith, *The blast of the terrible one is like a storme against the wall.* Yea, some men are not only dreadfull, like savage beasts, but like devills, they even act or play the devill with their brethren. How farre have they departed from their duty, and broken all the lawes of love, which command us to be as God one to another, in kindness, in mercy and compassion? I grant, Magistrates by their place and office are said to be terrible, *yea a terror*, but it is to *evill doers* (*Rom: 13. 3.*) *Rulers are not a terror to good workes, but to the evill*; that is, not to those whose workes are good, but to evill workers. And to them they ought to be a terror; *For they doe not beare the sword in vaine*; that is, to hold it in their hands, or let it rust in the scabbard, and never strike with it; *As they are Ministers of God*, so avengers towards men, to execute wrath upon him that doth evill. Againe, Gospel-Ministers in some cases are to be terrible, they may be *Boanergesses*, sons of thunder to the obstinate and rebellious, to the proud and presumptuous sinner; they must cut him out a portion to his condition, and *save him* (if it may be) *with feare*. But the generall temper and carriage of the Ministers of the Gospel is meekness and gentlenesse, they should be full of love and of compassion, *instructing even those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth.* (*2 Tim: 2. 25, 26.*) The Ministers of Christ must not deale out terror, till there be a necessity of it: And alwayes they who doe well, or are humbled for the evill which they have done, must be handled tenderly. *My terror shall not make thee afraid,*

Neither shall my hand be heavie upon thee.

Onus meum super te non erit grave. Targ: *Quidam vocem* *כבד* *ita sunt quasi* *My Burthen shall not be heavie upon thee,* saith the Chaldee Paraphrase, and so some translate out of the Hebrew, taking the derivation of the word from a roote which signifieth to *bow downe the backe*, as we doe when a burden is layd upon us. So the word is rendred (*Prov: 16. 26.*) *He that laboureth, labours for himselfe,*

selfe, for his mouth craveth it of him, that's our reading; and we put in the Margent, and his mouth boweth unto him. The mouth of a labouring man boweth to him, as begging that he would get and give it something to eate, and satisfie the craving of his hungry stomacke. 'Tis sad to see some poore men so given to Idleness, that they had rather starve then worke, and when (according to the propriety of this text in the *Proverbs*) their mouth boweth to them, that they would take paines to get a little bread to eate, they had rather endure the burthen of hunger, then the burthen of labour; But I instance this place only for that word which signifies a *burthen*, or to burthen. Those dreadfull Prophecies which were published against any people in Scripture, are called *Burthens*. *The Burthen of Duma*; the burthen of *Damascus*; the burthen of *Babylon*; that is, a prophecy which had a burthen of calamity in it, able to break the backs of the strongest Nations. So saith *Elihu* according to this translation; *My burthen shall not be heavie upon thee.*

Others render it thus, *My Eloquence shall not be heavie upon thee*; that's farre from the text; yet there is a truth in the thing; As if *Elihu* had said, Though I am about to speake, and have much to speake, yet I would not speak such words, nor so many (I hope) as shall be burthensome to thee. I would not burthen thee with Eloquence; that is, either with affected Eloquence, or the over-flowings of Eloquence. Multiplicity of expression is very burthensome; nor is any thing in speech more grievous to a wise man, then an unnecessary heape of words. They who have a fluency of speech, are usually more pleased to heare themselves speak, then others are to heare them. *Elihu* (according to this reading) spake discreetly, and to the purpose, while he thus engageth to *Job*; *I will not burthen thee with my Eloquence.* But I passe that also.

We translate fully and clearly to the text; *My hand shall not be heavie upon thee.* The hand is taken two wayes; properly, and improperly; it is not to be taken properly here; we cannot suspect *Elihu* of any such rude behaviour, that he would lay a violent hand on *Job*. Improperly the hand signifies any act of a man towards man; so a mans words may be his hand; A mans hand may be heavie on him, whom he never touched or came neere, yea, a mans hand may be heavie upon him whom he never saw.

Our

mat ab עֲבָרָה
quod est incur-
vare. q. d. opus
meum quod tibi
imponam non
erit tale, ut sub
eo incurveris.
Bold:
Inflexit se su-
per eum os su-
um. MORN:

Eloquentia mea
non erit tibi
gravis. Vulg.

עֲבָרָה pro עֲבָרָה
vota mea. i. e.
manus plaga, ut
Aleph sit addi-
tium sive Her-
manicum.
Druf:

Our hand is heaue upon others, not only by outward violence upon the body, but by any pressure upon the mind or inward man; our vexing or troubling another, whether by doing or saying that which afflicts him, is the laying of a heaue hand upon him. That's the meaning of *Elihu*; *My hand shall not be heaue upon thee*; that is, I will doe nothing, nor will I say any thing, which (in it selfe) shall be grievous and vexatious to thee. We finde *David* complaining (*Psal: 32. 4.*) that *the hand of God was heaue upon him day and night*; that is, God appeared as displeased with him, he could not get evidence of his love in the pardon of his sin; This pressed his soule like an intollerable burthen. Great afflictions of any kinde are a heaue hand upon us. *Elihu* who saw the heaue hand of God upon *Job* already, giveth him this comfortable promise, That he would not adde griefe to his sorrow; *My hand shall not be heaue upon thee*; I know thou halt thy load already. These latter words are of the same generall importance with the former; And we may Note further from them.

Meekness and gentle dealing becomes us while we would reduce others from their error, or reprove them for it.

My hand shall not be heaue upon thee.

The Apostle called God to record concerning the *Corinthians* (*2 Cor: 1. 23, 24.*) that it was to spare them that he had not come as then to *Corinth*. As if he had sayd, I was loth to lay so heaue a hand upon you, or deale with such severity, as your case required. And yet he adds, what severity soever I or others shall use towards you, we shall use it, *Not for that we have dominion over your faith, but as helpers of your Joy*. We shall not come with Lordly power upon you, we purpose not to carry it by meere authority and command, but of entreaty and love; we will not Lord it over your consciences, but only regulate them, that your comforts may flow in more freely. Hard words are oftentimes more pressing then the hardest blowes. Words may weigh much more upon the spirit, then a heaue burthen upon the backe. I grant a heaue hand must be layd upon some, there is no other way to deale with them. The word is a hammer and a fire. But as I intimated before, we must distinguish of persons and of causes, and accordingly lay our hand. God hath not made his Ministers

Ministers Lyons to scare his flock, nor Bulls to gore them, but Shepherds to feed them and watch over them. And especially when the hand of God is upon any, our hand should not.

For conclusion, take here the laws of a just disputation. *Elihu* in this Preface (I have yet gone no farther) gives *Job* free leave to answer, and let himselfe to the battaile with him, and promisseth to deale with him in the fairest and in the meetest way he could wish or desire. It is the observation of a moderne Expositor upon this place, considering the equanimity and gentlenesse with which *Elihu* engaged himselfe to mannage this dispute. *If such a spirit (saith he) could be found as here Elihu professeth Leviticus. in this controversie with Job, how soone might all our controversies be ended; but we see most men every where magisterially imposing one upon another, yea magistratically. If they cannot impose magisterially, and make others believe what they say, because they say it, then they will impose magistratically, the Magistrates sword shall make way, if strength of argument cannot. And (saith he) when they have disputed a while and answer is made, they will not receive answer, but tell of prisons, of sword and fire.* Thus he taxed the Popish Magistrates of those times, who layed indeed a most heaveie hand upon all who submitted not to the Babylonish yoke. And it were well if there were not something of such a spirit, a bitter spirit, an imposing spirit, a spirit of dominion over the faith of others remaining at this day; but that we could with sweetnes and gentlenesse treat about our differencies, and say as this man did (though a man full of zeale for truth) to our dissenters, we will not terrifie you with the Magistrates sword, nor will we deale by subtilenefs; we will not perswade you by bonds and prisons; *Our terror shall not make you afraid, nor our hand be heavie upon you, neither will we provoke other hands to be heavie on you; we will carry all things fairely, amicably, Christianly, waiting in the use of proper meanes, counsels, convictions, and prayers, till God shall make way into every mans spirit to receive the truth.*

Thus saith *Elihu* hath (like a subtle Orator) prefac'd it with *Job*, to prepare him for an attentive hearing, for a candid construction of, and a ready condiscention to what he had ready to propose, and say. *Hactenus exordium sequitur propositio.*

J O B. Chap. 33. Verf. 8, 9, 10, 11.

surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying,

I am clean without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.

Behold, he findeth occasions against me, he counteth me for his enemy.

He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.

E *lihu* having ended his sweet ingenuous and insinuating Preface, falls roundly to his business, and begins a very sharp charge. Bitter pills will hardly downe, unlesse guilded over and wrapped in sugar; nor will any mans stomach receive and digest them, unlesse well prepared. *Elihu* was wile enough to consider this; He knew well, what he had to say, and with whom to doe, and therefore layd his business accordingly.

In this charge (to give a brieve of the parts of it) *Elihu* tells *Job*; first, he had heard him speak (v: 8.) Secondly, he tells him what he hath heard him speak: And that may fall under these two heads; First, that he had heard him justifying himselfe, (v: 9.) *I have heard thee, saying, I am cleane without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* Secondly, He had heard him unduely reflecting upon God, and that two wayes; First, as over-severely observing him, as it were, to gather up matter against him, in the beginning of the 10th verse, and in the latter end of the 11th. *Behold, he findeth occasion against me, and marketh all my paths.* That's one reflection, and a very sore one upon God. Secondly, *Elihu* chargeth him with reflecting upon God, as over-severely dealing with him. That we have (v: 10th and 11th) *He counteth me for his enemy, he putteth my feet in the stocks, &c.* These things (saith *Elihu*) I have heard thee, saying; And having sayd all this, he had indeed sayd enough to make him blame-worthy.

Vers. 8. *Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying.*

There is nothing difficult in this verse. That which we render, *Thou hast spoken in my hearing*, is in the text; *Thou hast spoken in mine eare*; that is, *I have not gathered up what I bring against thee upon uncertaine reports, But have been an eare-witnesse of them. I have been one of thine hearers, I have stood by thee attentively, while thou hast been complaining so bitterly. Surely thou hast spoken in mine eare,*

And I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying.

Thus and thus, as it followeth in the next words. As if Elihu had sayd; *O Job, while I consider thy present suffering condition, I deny not that thy affliction is great, and thy crosse heavie; I deny not that thy afflictions are many, and of long continuance; I deny not that in the debate held with thy friends, thou hast spoken many things well, and hast insisted upon very profitable and remarkable truths: nevertheless, I cannot dissemble my dislike of some things thou hast spoken, and must tell thee plainly wherein either through passion, or want of information, thou hast been much mistaken. And yet thou shalt see that I will not impose my sense upon thy words, nor strain nor torture them by undue and odious inferences to thy disadvantage; But shall recollect and fairly represent some passages which have fallen from thee, and shew thee the error of them. I know thou canst not deny that thou hast sayd the things which I am offended with; and I believe when thou hast heard me a while, and considered better of them, thou wilt not undertake to defend them. Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying, I am cleane, &c.*

First, In that *Elihu* coming to charge *Job* about what he had spoken, professeth he had been a serious hearer of him, while he was speaking.

Observe.

What we object against others, we should have good evidence and prooffe of it our selves.

There are two infallible witnesses, or they may be so; First, eye-witnesses, such as have seene that which they say; the witness of
the

the eye is ſureſt as to what is done. Secondly, Eare-witneſſes, and they are the ſureſt as to what is ſpoken. We ſhould not take up accuſations by *heare-ſay*, but *be able to ſay, we have heard the accuſed ſay it*. Thus ſaid *Elihu*, I have not taken up this matter by the way, from thoſe I met with, But I have been upon the place my ſelte ; I ſtood by thee and heard while theſe words dropped from thy mouth. Many report what they never heard, they report upon report ; as thoſe accuſers in the Prophet, (*Jer: 20. 10.*) *Report (ſay they) and we will report it*. They cannot ſay, as *Elihu*, You have ſpoken it in our hearing, and we have heard the voyce of your words, but we heare you have ſpoken it ; or you are famed for ſpeaking it. How many tranſgreſs the rules of charity, and break the bonds not only of civill friendſhip, but of Chriſtian love, upon reports of what others report. 'Tis dangerous to report more of others, then we have heard them ſay, till (at leaſt) we are ſure the reporters heard them ſay it.

Againe, When *Elihu* ſaith, *Thou haſt ſpoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words* ; He would convince *Job* to the utmoſt.

Hence note.

To accuſe or condemne any man out of his owne mouth, miſt needs ſtop his mouth. Or, To be condemned out of our owne mouth, is an unanſwerable condemnation.

When our owne ſayings are brought againſt us, what have we to ſay ? Chriſt told the evill and unprofitable ſervant, who would needs put in a plea for his idleneſs, and excuſe himſelfe for hiding his Lords talent in a napkin (that is, for not uſing or improving his gift) (*Luk: 19. 22.*) *Out of thine owne mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked ſervant* ; I will goe no further then thy owne words. And we ſee, as that evill ſervant had done nothing before, ſo then he could ſay nothing, becauſe judged out of his owne mouth. When the offenders tongue condemneth him, who can acquit him ? (*Pſal: 64. 8.*) *So they ſhall make their owne tongue to fall upon themſelves*. The tongues of ſome men have fallen upon them, and cruſht them like a mountaine, and they have been preſſed downe, yea irrecoverably oppreſſed with the weight of their owne words. The Apoſtle *Jude* tells us what the Lord will do when he comes to Judgement, in that great and ſolemne day of his

his second Appearing; (v: 15.) *He shall convince all that are ungodly, of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* He shall say to them, are not these your words? can you deny them? or have you any plea for them? Have you not spoken these things in my hearing? And have I not heard the voyce of your words, speaking thus and thus reproachfully of my wayes, ordinances, and servants? This is like wounding a man with his own weapon, 'tis like the act of *David* in cutting off the head of *Goliath* with his owne sword. He that is condemned by his owne saying, dyeth by his own sword. *David* saith of sychophants and slanderers (*Psal: 55. 21.*) *Their words were smoother then oyle, yet were they drawne swords.* Such draw these swords with an intent to wound other mens reputation or good name, but they ofteneft wound their owne; And as their words who slander others, rebound upon themselves, and turne to their owne disgrace, so also doe theirs for the most part, who are much in commending or possibly only (which was *Jobs* case) in vindicating themselves. *Surely thou hast spoken in my hearing, &c.*

But what had *Elihu* heard *Job* speake? the next words are an answer, or declare the matter of his speech; and in them, as was said before in opening the Context; *Elihu* first chargeth him with an over-zeale in justifying himselfe, *I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying;*

Vers. 9. *I am cleane without transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

This thou hast sayd, and this I charge upon thee as a great iniquity. For the clearing of these words, I shall doe these foure things, because upon this charge the whole discourse of *Elihu* throughout the Chapter depends.

First, I shall give the sence and explication of the words as here expressed by *Elihu*, and some brieve notes from them.

Secondly, I shall shew what matter of accusation, or of fault there is in these words of *Job*, as brought by *Elihu* in charge against him, or how sinfull a thing it is for any man to say he is without sin.

Thirdly, I shall enquire what ground *Job* had given *Elihu* to charge him with saying these things.

Fourth-

Fourthly, (which followeth upon the third) I ſhall inquire whether *Elihu* dealt rightly and fairely with *Job*, in bringi ng thi ſore and ſevere charge againſt him.

Fiſt , To open the words, as they are an aſſertion, Thou haſt ſayd, *I am cleane without tranſgreſſion, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.* Some diſtinguiſh the three terms uled in the text, as a deniall of three ſeverall ſorts of ſin. Fiſt, That, by *being cleane without tranſgreſſion*, he intends his freedome from ſins againſt ſobriety, or that he had not ſinn'd againſt himſelfe. Secondly, that, *by being innocent*, his meaning is, he had not done impiouſly againſt God. Thirdly, that, by *having no iniquity in him*, he cleares himſelfe of wrong done to man. Theſe three ſorts of ſin, containe ſin in the whole latitude of it. All ſin is either againſt our ſelves, ſtrictly called intemperance, or againſt God, ſtrictly called impiety, or againſt man, ſtrictly called unrighteouſneſſe. But though this hath a truth in it, as to the diſtinction of ſins, yet it may be over-nice to conclude *Elihu* had ſuch a diſtinct reſpect in theſe diſtinct expreſſions ; And it may be queſtioned whether the words will beare it quite thorow. Therefore I paſſe from it and leave it to the readers Judgement.

Further as to the verſe in generall, we may take notice, that the ſame thing is ſayd foure times ; twice affirmatively, *I am cleane, I am innocent* ; And twice negatively, *I am without tranſgreſſion, There is no iniquity in me.*

I am cleane without tranſgreſſion.

The word which we render *cleane*, implyeth the cleaneſt of cleanneſſe ; tis rightly oppoſed to the word *tranſgreſſion*, which ſigniſieth, a defection or turning off from God. Every ſin in the nature of it, is a defection from God ; but ſome ſins are an intended or reſolved defection from him. Some even throw off the ſoveraignty of God over them, and his power to command them, not being willing to ſubmit their backs to his burden, nor their necks to his yoke. Theſe are juſtly called *ſons of Belial*, they not only tranſgreſſe the Law. but throw off the yoke of Chriſt from their necks, and his burden from their ſhoulders, and ſay (like them, *Luke 19. 14.*) *We will not have this man reigne over us.* So then, when *Job* ſayd, *I am cleane without tranſgreſſion*, he may be very well underſtood thus ; *Though I have many failings, yet*

I am free from defection, though I have many weaknesses, yet I am free from rebellion and obstinacy. I still retain an entire love to God, and am ready to submit to his will, though I often find my heart, through corruption, rising up against my duty; I am turned aside through the strength of temptations, but I turne not aside through the bent of my affections. This doubtlesse or somewhat like this was Job's sence when ever he sayd, I am cleane without transgression.

Hence note.

First, *Transgression is a pollution, or, Sin is a defilement.*

If once men step over or besides the line and rule of holinesse the Law of God (which to doe is transgression) they become unholy. Job supposed himselfe unclean, if guilty of transgression. Sin is an unclean thing, and it maketh man unclean. This the Church confessed (*Isa: 64. 6.*) *We all are as an unclean thing,* or person; As if they had said, Time was, when there was a choice people among us, who kept themselves pure from common defilements; But now the contagion and corruption is so epidemically and universal, that the whole body of our people looks like a lump of filthinesse and uncleannesse. We are over-spread with a loathsome Leprosie from head to foote, from top to toe. Holinesse keeps us faire, and righteousness sweet.

Secondly, Note.

A sinlesse person is a cleane person.

When we arrive at perfect freedome from sin, we shall be cleane indeed, perfectly cleane. And according to the degree or proportion of our freedome from sin in this world, is our cleannesse in this unclean world.

Secondly, Thou hast said, *I am innocent*; so we read; There are two significations given by the learned, which are of very usefull consideration for the clearing up of this text. First, the Hebrew word which we translate *innocent*, is derived from a roote which signifieth to hide, to cover, or protect; And that two wayes; First, to protect actively, or to defend others; Secondly, It notes protection passively, or to be protected by another. Some conceive that *Elihu* here intended it of *Job* in an active signification, whereas we say, *I am innocent*, they say, *I protect*,

הגן א הגן
Tegere & pre-
tegere unde
גן portum, in
quo nares sunt
testis et tunc a
vento. Merc:
aud.

and so referre to him, as a Magistrate I have protected the oppressed, I have protected those whom the sons of violence have prosecuted. Indeed *Job* speaks his practice much in that (Chap. 29. 12.) *I delivered the poore that cryed, and the fatherless, and him that had none to helpe him ; The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widdows heart to sing for joy.* *Job* had been a great Protector of the poore ; And by this word the Hebrews expresse an haven or harbour for Ships ; Because harbours or havens are places of protection to Ships ; First, they are places of protection to Ships from winds and storms, they are safe places from rocks, shelves and sands ; a Ship in harbour is under protection from the dangers of the Sea. Secondly, A Ship in harbour is under protection from enemies and Pirats ; while shee is abroad at Sea, if enemies come shee must shift for her selfe, shee must run or fight, but in the harbour she is under the protection of the State or Country where she arriveth. Thus all Magistrates are or should be, a just Magistrate is a good harbour for all that are in danger of the winds and stormes, of the rocks and rage of wicked men. Good Governours are an harbour, and oppressors like storms and rocks. That's one sence of the word in the active signification. And taking it in this sence *Job* asserts highly for his owne honour, while he saith, I have been a protectour of the oppressed, I have been a harbour or a haven to the weather-beaten poore.

Secondly, Others take this protection passively, *I have been protected.* *Job* was once protected from all outward evill, from the invasion of devills and evill men. God made such an hedge about him, that Satan could not touch him. But the sence given of this protection here intended is spirituall, *I have been protected from the evill of the world, or from the evill world, I have been kept from that pollution and corruption, which (as the Apostle Peter speaks) is in the world through lust.* And that is a blessed, yea the best part of a Saints protection, *he is kept through the power of God through faith unto salvation ;* He is not given up to the defilements and apostacy of times or places, the Lord preserves his spirit and his wayes pure and cleane. Our translation, *I am innocent,* compared with this, *I have been kept or protected from sin.* The one is a very good exposition and illustration of the other ; *For innocency is our safety, and integrity our best keeper. Innocency*

is our faire haven, and safest harbour. When the windes are highest, and the Seas most rough and angry, there, if any where, we may shelter and anchor our selves from the storme and tempest. Thus David prayed (*Psal: 25. 21.*) *Let integrity and uprightness preserve me*; that is, let me be preserved in mine integrity and uprightness. And that he had been so preserved, he tells us (*Pf: 41. 12.*) *As for me thou upholdest me in mine integrity*. He that can say, *I am innocent*, shall have cause to say, *I am protected*; the innocent person is under covert; God protecteth the innocent, yea maketh innocency their protection. Man is never so well shelter'd, as by the righteousness of Christ, and by his own innocency. 'Tis guilt which leaves our breast naked to every dart and thrust.

Againe to come a little nearer to our translation (though this be very significant) *I am innocent*; 'Tis a negative, I have done no hurt, or I have no guilt upon me. The Rabbins tell us, the word cometh from a roote which signifieth to wash, and so the Chaldee Paraphrase renders, *I am washed*; Others thus, *I am brushed or comb'd*; Mr Broughton, *I am neat*, like a man that hath put on his apparrell decently; some are in a slovenly habit, or their cloaths are foule; but Job could say as to his better part and spirituall cloathing, *I am innocent*, washed, brushed, comb'd. I have no filth in my skirts, nor foulness in my hands. I goe not in the nasty habit of sin, but in the lovely, comely, beautiful dresse of Grace. Thus various is the sence of the word which we translate *innocent*. Job's conversation was so well ordered, that it had not a plight nor an haire (common infirmities excepted) amisse or out of order. Our translation gives in his mind fully, yet it is not unprofitable to take in this plenty and copiousness of elegant metaphors rising out of the original words, here rendred, *I am innocent*. But if we take the word strictly, then to be innocent, is to doe or to have done no hurt, to be harmlesse, and so guiltlesse of the hurt or harme of any.

עין עז Rabinico verbo
עין עז exponunt
quod significat
peccare & se
mundare.
Loci go. e
Targ:
Tersu ego sum.
Coc:

Hence note.

Sin is an hurtfull thing.

It hurts, first our selves; Secondly, it hurts others in whose sight it is committed, either first by the ill example given them; or, secondly, by injury done to them; either first in their credit, or, secondly, in their estates. Yea, thirdly, sin hurts God him-

selfe; It hurts God in his honour. Innocency is properly that which doth no hurt; Innocent persons are harmelesse persons; no man ever hurt himselfe, or others, much lesse the name and honour of God, while he holdeth his innocency.

Job's last assertion is;

Neither is there iniquity in me.

*IN, pravitas
est rectitudini
opposita.*

Iniquity is that pravity either of spirit or action which is contrary to all that righteousness or rectitude which the rule of Gods word requireth. It comprehends both the irregularity of our actions, and the irregularity of our thoughts or conceptions. 'Tis a departure from the way in which, and from the scope and mark, to which we should direct our whole course. Iniquity is an unequall an undue or crooked thing. It turneth others from their right, and is it selfe a continuall twerving from it. So much for the opening of these words, as they are a proposition containing a charge brought against *Job*, *I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying, I am cleane from transgression, I am innocent, neither is there iniquity in me.*

The second poynt proposed was, to consider what matter of accusation there is in these words. Matters of accusation arise from our evill deeds; *That we are not cleane from transgression, that we are not innocent, that there is much iniquity in us;* these are properly matter of accusation. But here *Elihu* makes it matter of accusation, that *Job* sayd, he was cleane from transgression, that he was innocent, that there was no iniquity in him. And indeed, to be charged with the greatest transgression, is not more then this, to be charged with saying, we are cleane from transgression. To say we have no sin, is very sinfull, to say we are without iniquity, is a saying full of iniquity, (*1 John 1. 8.*) *If we say we have no sin.* (Here is *Job* saying so, as *Elihu* chargeth him) *we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.* And (*v. 10.*) *If any man say, he hath no sin, he maketh God a lyar, and his word is not in him.* Now what greater sin can there be, if we consider the force of these two verses, then for any man to say he hath no sin? How extreemly sinfull this is, may be shewed in foure things.

First, It is extreame pride for any man to say; *I have no sin;* What is pride? but an over-reckoning of our selves. When we value

value our selves; tis best to doe it at an under rate, and to say lesse of our selves (if it may be) then we are, as *Paul* did, who called himselfe *lesse then the least of all Saints* ; Pride alwayes over-reckons and casts us up more then we are worth. Some reckon their temporall and many more their spirituall estates at many thousands (as I may say) when upon a true account they are worse then nothing. So did the Church of *Laodicea* (*Rev: 3. 17.*) *Thou sayest I am rich, and encreased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poore, and blind, and naked.* They who are soule-blind, cannot see either how bad they are, or what good they want ; Nothing hinders the sight of our wants so much as a conceit that we are full.

Secondly ; It is the greatest deceit, even selfe-deceit, to say or suppose that we are (in this sence) *cleane without transgression* ; so saith that text of the Apostle (*v: 8.*) *He that saith he hath no sin, deceiveth himselfe.* It is bad enough to deceive others, and woe to them that doe so ; but how bad is their condition who deceive themselves ! He is in an ill condition who is deceived by others ; But if a man deceive himselfe, where shall he have his amends ? Selfe-admirers, and selfe-flatterers, are the Greatest selfe-deceivers. And who or what shall be true to that man, who is false to himselfe ?

Thirdly, It is a lye and the greatest lye, (that's more then a bare deceit) for it is such a lye as leaveth no truth at all in us. He that saith he hath no sin in him, hath no truth in him ; what hath he in him then, but a lye ? Every sin is a lye, and he that saith he hath no sin in him, hath nothing of truth in him ; what hath he then in him, or what is he, but a lye ? (*v: 10.*) *The word of God is not in him,* which is the treasury of all truth ; and therefore he hath no truth in him, nor can have, till he hath repented of that lye.

Fourthly, (that ye may see there is exceeding much in this charge) *To say so, is blasphemy, and the highest blasphemy ;* Why ? Because it makes God a lyar, He that saith he hath no sin, doth not only deceive himselfe, but as much as in him lyeth, he makes God a lyar (*v: 10.*) To deceive with a lye, is the worst sort of deceivings ; and what lye is worse then, or so bad as that which makes the God of truth a lyar, and turnes the truth of

God into a lye. Lay these foure considerations together, and then it will appeare how heauey a charge is contained in these words, when *Elihu* saith he had heard *Job* say, *he was cleane without transgression, he was innocent, and no iniquity in him.*

Therefore, thirdly, consider a little further, what occasion had *Job* given *Elihu* to say that he had sayd, *I am cleane from transgression, &c.*

I answer, There are severall passages upon which *Elihu* might pitch this charge; I will only name foure texts, out of which, possibly this might arise. First, (*Chap: 10. 7.*) where *Job* speaking to God himselfe saith; *Thou knowest that I am not wicked.* He appealed to the knowledge of God himselfe in the thing. The second may be collected from (*Chap: 16. 17.*) *Not for any injustice in my hand, also my prayer is pure.* The third, from (*Chap: 23. 10.*) *But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me I shall come forth as gold; My foot hath held his steps, his way have I kept and not declined.* In the fourth place *Elihu* might take those words (*Chap: 27. 5.*) *God forbid that I should iustifie you, till I die I will not remove my integrity from me. My righteousness I hold fast, and will not let it goe, my heart shall not reproach me as long as I live.* All these are *Job's* assertions concerning his owne innocency, And these or such like passages as these, *Elihu* ('tis likely.) being an attentive hearer, had observed and picked up as the matter of this first part of his charge, *Job's* self-justification.

Fourthly, and lastly, let us consider whether *Elihu* did rightly bring this charge against *Job* from these sayings? or whether he dealt so ingenuously with *Job* as he promised, while from these or the like passages he saith, *Job* had sayd, *I am cleane without transgression, &c.*

For answer, first, take notice that *Elihu* was not the first that had charged *Job* thus; he had been thus charged by his three friends before. *Zophar* sayd (*Chap: 11. 4.*) *Thou hast sayd my doctrine is pure, and I am cleane in thine eyes;* that is, in the eyes of God. *Eliphaz* seemes to say as much (*Chap: 15. 14.*) *What is man that he should be cleane? and he which is borne of a woman that he should be righteous?* While *Eliphaz* put these questions, he intimated that *Job* had made such affirmations. *Bildad* likewise was upon the same strain with him- (*Chap: 25. 4.*) *How then*

then can man be justified with God? or how can he be cleane that is borne of a woman? We see then, this was not the first time by three, that *Job* had heard this charge, and had made answer for himselfe. And as these charges; so *Job's* answers have been opened heretofore upon those former passages, and therefore I shall not stay much upon the poynt here. Yet because *Elihu* re-assumes this argument, yea makes it his strongest argument against *Job*, I shall a little consider whether he did rightly or no in this thing.

To cleare (which we must remember) that *Job's* innocency had received a three-fold testimony in this booke.

First, He received a testimony from God himselfe, and that a very notable and glorious one (*Chap. 1. 8.*) *Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man.*

Secondly, He received a further testimony from the pen-man of this booke, who having recorded the severall afflictions of *Job*, and his behaviour under them, repeats it twice (*Chap. 1. 21. Chap. 2. 10.*) *In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.* The testimony which God gave him, referred to his former actions or conversation before his affliction. The testimony which the writer gave him, referred specially to his latter words or speeches under his affliction. Besides these testimonies which are not at all questioned nor can be; we find a third testimony, and that he gives of himselfe. Now though *Elihu* did highly reverence the testimony which God had given (if we may suppose he had notice of it) and would also the testimony of the pen-man of the booke, had it then been written; yet he questioned the testimony which *Job* gave of himselfe. Now, that there was some severity in this charge upon that suspicion, may appeare by considering it in a few particulars:

First, It must be sayd on *Job's* part, or in favour of him, according to truth, that he never affirmed, he was not a sinner. Nay we shall find him more then once, twice, or thrice, confessing the sinfulness of his nature, and the sins of his life. We find him also confessing that notwithstanding all the righteousness and integrity in him, yet he would owne none of it before God; and that if he should justifie himselfe, his owne cloaths would abhorre him. Therefore *Job* was far from saying he had no sin in him, in a strict sence. Se-

Secondly, Moſt of thoſe paſſages wherein he ſpeakes of himſelfe as cleane and righteous, may be underſtood of his imputative cleannesse and righteouſneſſe, as a perſon juſtified in the redeemer, of whom he ſpoke with ſuch a Goſpel ſpirit and full aſſurance of faith, that he might well aſſert this of himſelfe, *I know that being juſtified, I am cleane and without ſin.* It is no fault for a believer to ſay, *I am cleane without tranſgreſſion, through free Grace, in the righteouſneſſe of Jeſus Chriſt.* Much of what *Job* ſpoke in this matter is to be taken that way.

Thirdly, When *Job* affirms theſe things of himſelfe, we may ſay this in favour of him, he meanes it of great tranſgreſſions. The words in the text note defection and wilfull ſwerving from the right way. His friends charged him with hypocriſie, with oppreſſion, with taking the pledge for nought, with ſtripping the naked of their clothing. *Thine iniquity is great* (ſaid *Eliphaz*) *and thy ſin is infinite.* Now ſaith *Job*, *I am cleane*, I have no ſuch tranſgreſſions. And he might well answer his friends charge of impiety againſt God, and iniquity towards men, with a flat deniall, yea with an affirmation of the contrary; There is no ſuch iniquity in me, prove it if you can. He was unblameable in the ſight of man.

Fourthly, In favour of *Job* this may be ſayd; what he ſpoke of himſelfe and of his owne righteouſneſſe, was upon much provocation, or when his ſpirit was heated by his friends, who ſo conſtantly urged theſe crimes againſt him. In theſe heats he ſpoke highly of himſelfe, and though it doth not excuſe any mans ſin when he hath ſpoken ſinfully, to ſay I was provoked; yet it doth abate the greatneſſe of the ſin. Good *Moses* (who was the meekeſt man upon the earth) when through provocation he ſpoke unadviſedly with his lips, felt the ſmart of it, and God reckoned ſorely with him for it: Yet to ſpeake amiſſe upon provocation, is not ſo much amiſſe, as to ſpeake ſo in cold blood, or unprovoked.

Fifthly, *Elihu* might have put a fairer interpretation and conſtruction upon theſe ſayings of *Job*; He might have taken them in the beſt ſence, as *Job* meant them, that he was righteous, cleane and innocent in all his tranſactions with men, and had not wickedly at any time departed from God. And then there had not been ſuch matter of fault in what he ſaid, as was brought againſt him.

Yet

Yet, in vindication of *Elihu*, it muſt be granted, *Job* gave him occaſion to rebuke and blame what he had laid, and that chiefly upon theſe three accounts.

• Firſt, Becauſe he ſpoke many things of himſelfe which had an appearance of boaiſting, and ſo of vaine ſpeaking. A little truly ſayd of our ſelves, or in our owne commendation, may be thought too much, how much more, when we ſay much.

• Secondly, He ſpoke ſuch things as carri'd a ſhew of overboldneſs with God. He did not obſerve his diſtance, as he ought, when he ſo earneſtly preſſed for a hearing to plead his cauſe before God; eſpecially, when he ſo often complained of the ſeverity of Gods procedurè with him, with which *Elihu* taxeth him directly in the two verſes following. Upon both theſe grounds *Elihu* thought (and was no doubt guided in it by the Spirit of God) to cut him to the quick, that *Job* might learne to ſpeake more humbly of himſelfe, and more temperately to God. And therefore

Thirdly, The Lord did righteouſly, yea and graciouſly let out the ſpirit of *Elihu* upon him in another way then his friends before had done. He did not charge him with wickedneſs in fact, but dealt with him about the unwarineſs of his words. *Job* could not ſay he had never ſpoken ſuch words, for ſuch words he did ſpeake, though he did not ſpeake them as *Elihu* tooke them. When words are out they muſt ſtand to the mercy of the hearers, and abide ſuch a judgement as may, with truth be made of them, though poſſibly, beſides the purpoſe of the ſpeaker. A man (in that caſe) is not wronged, he ſhould learne to ſpeak more warily, and not give occaſion of offence. Doubtleſſe the Lord had a gracious intent upon *Job*, in ſtirring the ſpirit of *Elihu* to repreſent his words in the hardeſt ſence, that he might humble him. *Job*'s ſpirit was yet too high and not broken enough, as it was afterwards. Nor doth *Job* reply or retort upon *Elihu* for this; And when the Lord himſelfe began to deal with him, he ſaith, *Who is this that darkeneth counſell by words without knowledge* (Chap: 38. 2.) and *Job* himſelfe being brought upon his knees confeſſeth (Chap: 42. 3.) *I have uttered that I underſtood not, things too wonderfull for me; which I knew not: I have been too bold I confeſſe. Though 'it was not Jobs purpoſe or meaning to ſpeake ſo (he had integrity in what he ſpoke)* yet

yet his words did beare such a construction. And the Lord suffer'd *Elihu* to urge them upon him to the utmost.

Yet, notwithstanding all that hath been sayd, I doe conceive, that *Elihu* had not the least imagination, that the meaning of *Job* in those assertions concerning himselfe, was, that he had not sinned at all, or that there was no sin in him; But taking his words in the best and fairest construction they could beare, he yet saw cause to check and reprove him, for saying so much, in that condition, about his innocency; whereas he should have been chiefly taken up in glorifying God, and humbling himselfe under his mighty hand. So much for the answer to the fourth query, what reason *Elihu* had to charge *Job* thus? It hath been shewed what may be sayd in favour of *Job*; And also, that *Elihu* might without breach of charity charge him with these sayings.

To shut up this verse, take only two briefe notes from the whole.

First, *The best of men have their failings, and are apt to over-report themselves.*

Our most deliberate actions and speeches have some tincture of the flesh, how much more those which passe us in a passion. Though *Job* spake what was true, yet he spake more then was meete. And they that heard him might take just occasion of offence, not knowing his spirit and the strain of his heart in speaking so. The Apostle *James* saith (*James* 3. 2.) *If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body.* He hath a mighty command over his spirit, that can command his tongue; especially when he is provoked. It is a reall part of perfection, not to offend in word. This good man spake many things well, yet all was not well spoken.

Againe, In that *Job* spake thus, under the pressure of affliction.

In times of affliction it is better to be much in bewailing of sin, then in making reports wherein we have not sinned.

There will no hurt come of that; but while we are reporting our innocency, and good deeds, though what we speak be true, yet 'tis subject to construction, and layeth us open to reproofe.

Lastly, We may learne from the dealing of *Elihu* with *Job*,
That

That in all disputations, and matters of contröversie with others, we should take heed, that we fasten no uncharitable interpretation upon the words of our adversary, nor adde any thing of our owne to them, nor wrest them besides their grammaticall and genuine construction ; yet even those speeches which are true in some respect, if they exceed the bounds of modesty, may freely be reprehended. For we ought not only to doe that which is good, and speake that which is true for the matter, but we ought to doe and speake in a good or becoming manner. Thus farre of the first fault which *Elihu* found and reproved in *Job*, his overconfidence in saying he was not faulty, or in justifying himselfe. In the two next verses, he blames him with reflecting overboldly and unduely upon the dealings of God ; The particulars whereof were exprest before in opening the whole Context, and come now to be further opened.

Vers. 10. *Behold, he findeth occasions against me, and counteth me for his enemy.*

These words containe the first part of the second charge. For the clearing of which I shall first explicate the words, & then by way of observation, shew what matter of charge or evill there is in them.

Behold, he findeth occasions against me.

I have heretofore shewed the emphasie of that word, *Behold* ; And therefore, I passe it here ; *Behold*,

He (that is, God) *findeth occasions against me*, or, (strictly from the Hebrew) *he findeth breaches*.

The verbe is translated *Breake* (*Psal: 141. 5.*) It imports such a breaking as is also a bringing to nought (*Psal: 33. 10.*) 'Tis likewise applied to the breaking of the heart by discouragements (*Numb: 32. 7.*) And it is significantly enough translated here, *He findeth breaches against me* ; that is, something or other to make a breach upon me, something to complaine of against me. The word is rendred in these three sences ; First, *An occasion* ; Secondly, *A Breach* ; Thirdly (as the Septuagint) *a complaint or accusation*. We may joine all three together ; for a complaint

Quærit adver-
sum me et inve-
nit contrafracti-
ones, i.e. ut con-
fringat et irrita
faciat omnia
mea studia, in-
stituta et cona-
tum, ut nihil af-
sequar eorum,
quæ quæro et
instituo. Merc:
Ecce contrafracti-
ones adversum
me invenit.

Bez:
הוּ אֵיךְ con-
fractiões, con-
tritiões et qua-
si abolitiones.
Sunt qui red-
dunt occasio-
nes, quasi esset
הוּ אֵיךְ lite-
ris transpositis,
alij querelis.
Radix הוּ
inde Hiphit
הוּ אֵיךְ fregit,
confregit irri-
tum fecit.
Merc:

ἐμὲ ἐ. πιν. Ac-
cusationem au-
tem adversum
me invenit.

Sept:

Qui querelas
amat, querit
ocasiones unde
illis excitat.

Bold:

Deus studiosè
quaesivit ansam
me persequen-
di.

or accusation is commonly an occasion of breaches among men ; he that loves breaches will seeke, and seldome misseth occasions of complaint. We say of a man that is of a troublesome spirit, and given to contention (which is also Mr *Broughtons* translation) *Behold, he picketh a quarrell against me* ; though I give him no just matter of offence, yet he either findeth or maketh one. Thus most of the Hebrew writers carry it ; he findeth occasions to alter his former course with me, to cast me off, to lay his hand upon me, even to ruine and break me to pieces.

Hence observe.

To seeke occasions against another is hard and uncharitable dealing.

Josephs brethren were very suspicious of this (*Gen: 43. 18.*) *The men were afraid because they were brought to Josephs house, and they said, because of the money that was found in our sacks mouth the first time, are we brought in that he may seek occasion against us ;* As if they had said, we well perceive he would gladly have some matter to accuse us, and so to detain us upon that occasion. Thus said the King of Israel (*2 Kings 5. 7.*) when *Naman* came to him with a message from his Prince to desire him that he would heale him of his Leprosie ; The King of *Israel* began presently to startle, and thought it was nothing but a meere trick and a device to bring on some further designe, what ? said he, *Am I God to kill and make alive, that this man is come to me, wherefore consider I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrell against me.* They may be judged to watch for a discourtesie who desire courtesies of us beyond our power. This made the King of *Israel* jealous, that the King of *Syria* being confident of future successe, by his former successes against *Israel*, was by this device only seeking an occasion to renew the warre. We have an eminent Scripture to this purpose (*Dan: 6. 4, 5.*) *Daniel* being advanced high at Court, it drew a great deale of envie upon him among the Princes and Presidents ; and therefore they resolved to try their utmost to pull him down ; And hereupon (saith the text) *they sought occasions against Daniel concerning the kingdom* ; that is, they enquired narrowly into his proceedings as to the managment of that great power and trust which the King had committed to him in civill things, but *they could find no occasion*

casion, nor fault, forasmuch as he was faithfull. They could not pick a hole in his coate (as we say) neither was there any error or fault found in him. When this would not doe, then they would needs goe another way to worke (envie is restless) and because they were disappointed in their first attempt about civills, they proceeded to matters of religion; *Then said those men we shall not finde occasion against this Daniel, except we finde it in regard of the Law of his God.* And we see in the following parts of the Chapter, what occasion they found against him. This is hard dealing indeed, and it is quite contrary to the Law of Love in all the actings of it. The Apostle assures us (1 Cor: 13. 7.) *Love beareth all things, Love hath strong shoulders to beare wrongs and injuries, and Love believeth all things;* not that a believer is a vaine credulous person, giving out his faith he knows not how, or to he knows not what; but he believeth all things to the utmost line of truth and reality, as also of appearance and probability; he that loves is very willing to believe that things are meant as they are spoken, and that they are intended as they are done. Thus he that loves much, *believes all things,* and further, *charity hopeth all things;* it hopes the best, and puts the fairest interpretation that may be upon those things and doings which carry in them at least some colour of suspition; this is the Genius of Charity, the Character of Love. *It beareth all things, it believeth all things, it hopeth all things.* All which stand in direct opposition to the seeking of occasions against our neighbour. And I shall briefly shew how much such practices militate against and contradict the royall Law of love, by seven steps.

First, 'Tis against the Law of love, to be ready to take an occasion when it is given; we should be very slow and backward, in case of offence, to embrace or admit what is offered: though indeed, it is with the heart of man, I meane with the flesh in his heart in this poynt of the Law, as it is with the flesh (that is, sinfull corruption) in the heart, as to the whole Law of God; Of which the Apostle saith (Rom: 7. 8.) *Sin taking occasion by the Commandement, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence.* And againe (v: 11.) *Sin taking occasion by the commandement, deceived me, and by it slew me:* Sin took occasion by the Law; The Law gave sin no occasion to work concupiscence in Paul. The Law is farre enough from being the cause of sin, but it is (by accident

not of it ſelfe) the occaſion of ſin ; yea, ſin preſently takes occaſion when it hath not indeed the ſhew of any juſt occaſion. The Law by its prohibition, by the ſtep and check which it puts upon the fleſh, by the diſcoveries which it makes of the contrariety of our corruptions to the holineſs of it, doth many times provoke and irritate, yea enrage and enſlame them, but it affords not the leaſt countenance or encouragement to our corruptions. Now this (I ſay) is the wickedneſs of the heart of man, with reſpect to ſin in Generall, that it takes occaſion by the commandement, to bend it ſelfe againſt the commandement: and ſo as to any particular act againſt a brother, to take an occaſion to doe him a miſchiefe, is wickedneſs, and a worke of the fleſh.

Secondly, It is ſinfull to uſe our Chriſtian liberty, when it may be an occaſion of ſin, or the laying of a ſtumbling block before others, though we uſe it not with an intent or purpoſe to make them ſtumble or fall into ſin. The Apoſtle earneſtly cautions the *Romans* to take heed of this (*Rom: 14. 13.*) *Let us not therefore judge one another any more ; but judge this rather, that no man put a ſtumbling block or an occaſion to fall in his brothers way.* St Paul is there ſpeaking about the obſervation of dayes commanded, and the uſe of meates forbidden by the ceremoniall Law. Now though ſome had a liberty in their conſciences, to obſerve the one, and uſe the other, yet he would not have them doe either with offence to weaker brethren : our care ſhould be, either firſt to keepe our brother from falling, or to raiſe him up when fallen. Is it not then very ſinfull not to forbear thoſe things (which are no abſolute duties) by which another may fall ? And if it be ſo ſinfull : to doe many things which in themſelves are not ſinfull, when we know they may be an offence or occaſion of falling to others, though we intend it not ; then how extreemly ſinfull is it to do any thing with an intent to make them fall ! This is properly the devills trade, and woe to thoſe who take it out of his hand, or joyne partners with him in it.

Thirdly, When any ſhall deſire and even hunger after an occaſion of accusing others, this is a very great height of wickedneſſe. The Apoſtle ſpeakes of ſuch (*2 Cor: 11. 9, 12.*) where he tells us that he did forbear his own right, not receiving maintenance for preaching the Goſpel ; *When (ſaith he, v: 9.) I was preſent with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man.*

But

But why? he answers (*v. 12.*) *What I doe I will doe, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion.* Some did, it seems, desire an occasion to charge him with covetousnesse and worldly mindednesse, that he preached the Gospel for filthy lucre; therefore, saith he, I will doe this, that I may cut off occasion from them that desire occasion to charge me with. The heart of man is full of evill desires, and this is one of the worst of them, to desire another might be found doing that, which might minister an advantage to render him odious or blame-worthy.

Fourthly, Which is yet higher, some even pursue and hunt for occasions to caluminate and slander their brethren. The good Prophet *Jeremie* had store of these ill neighbours (*Jer: 20. 10.*) *I have heard the defaming of many; feare is on every side; report, say they, and we will report it; all my familiars watched for my halting, saying, peradventure he will be inticed, and we shall prevaile against him, and we shall take our revenge on him.* As if he had said, How glad would not only my open familiars, but close enemies be, of an occasion against me, it would make them leape for joy to see me halt. By his halting they meant his sinning, his doing that which was uncomely, or not suitable to his profession; they watched, they lay at catch for his halting, not to hold him up, but to cast him downe: They sayd, *report, and we will report it; we will make something or other of it, though in truth there be nothing.* They had (which may be a fifth step of this wickednesse, a secret hope that he would halt and give them occasion of insulting. *Peradventure (say they) he will be inticed, peradventure we shall catch him in this snare; this was their hope, and, if attained, their joy.*

Which makes a 6th step of this wickednesse; For so *David* describes his enemies (*Psal: 38. 16, 17.*) *They rejoyce when my foot slippeth; for I am ready to halt,* or (as we put in the margin) *for halting.* There is a double halting, a halting by transgression, and a halting by affliction; that I conceive *David* chiefly spake of in that place, because he presently adds in the close of the 17th verse, *And my sorrow is continually before me.* He shewes his enemies possessed with the same evill spirit, and in the same posture (*Psal: 35. 15.*) *In mine adversity, or, in my halting, they rejoyced.* The same word is used in this Psalm for adversity which we had in the 38th for *halting.* This is as true of evill men;

men, as halting is taken in the other notion, for ſinning. The wicked are as, if not more, ready to rejoyce at falls, or halts, by ſinning, as at falls or halts by ſuffering. In both theſe caſes (as *David* found in this 35th *Psalm*, v. 15.) the very abjects will teare the beſt of men (as they did *David*) and not ceaſe. But what doe they teare? their fleſh, if they can; but to be ſure (and ſo 'tis meant there) their good names and reputation by ſlanders and accuſations. O how contrary is this practice and that joy to the ſpirit of the Goſpel! The Apoſtle tells us, the Grace of charity utterly abhorres it (1 *Cor.* 13. 6.) *Charity rejoyceth not in iniquity.* It neither rejoyceth in doing iniquity it ſelfe, nor to charge others with iniquity.

Seventhly, (which is the higheſt ſtep) Some rather then faile will forme and frame occaſions againſt others; they will forge or fancy them in their own braine, and then accuſe their brethren, as if they had been aſting, what themſelves have been imagining. Such the Apoſtle *Peter* ſpeaks of (1 *Pet.* 3. 16.) where admoniſhing Saints to much ſtrictneſſe and exactneſſe in walking, he gives this account, why they ſhould doe ſo, *That whereas they ſpeak evill of you as evill doers, they may be aſhamed that faſely accuſe your good converſation in Chriſt.* They who have not ſo much as a ſhadow of truth, will make ſomething out of a lie; they will faſely accuſe, and ſtrongly impeach, knowing that if they doe ſo, ſome of the dirt (at leaſt) will diſfigure the faces, and ſtick upon the ſkirts of thoſe who are impeached. Thus I have given ſeven degrees of this wickedneſſe, every one of which plainly diſcover, and all put together, mightily aggravate the ſinfullneſſe of this ſin, the ſeeking of occaſions againſt any man whoſoever, much more againſt any good man. And therefore (which was the ſecond poynt propoſed for the clearing of this truth) you ſee how great a matter of charge was brought by *Elihu* againſt *Job*, when he ſaith, *Job* hath ſayd, *He*, (that is, God) *ſeeketh occaſions againſt me.*

Hence note, Secondly.

To charge the Lord with a willingneſſe to breake with us, either upon no occaſion, or to ſeek an occaſion that he may, is exceeding ſinfull, and diſhonourable to his Majeſty, neere to Blaſphemy.

How sinfull is it, that we who give the Lord so many occasions against us, that he needs not seek any, should yet say he seeketh occasions against us? The people of *Israel* (as it appears) intimated, at least, that God had broken with them, or sought occasion to doe it (this word is used in that text, *Numb. 14. 34.*) while the Lord to shew how ill he resented such thoughts and jealousies of him, tells them, *According to the number of the dayes in which ye searched the Land, even forty dayes (each day for a yeare) shall ye beare your iniquities, even forty yeares, and ye shall know my breach of promise, or (as read in the margin) my Altering of my purpose.* As if he had said, Ye shall know whether I have sought occasion against you, whether I have frustrated your hopes and endeavours, these forty yeares in the wilderness or no; ye shall know whether I have done any thing to breake and entangle you, or whether all this hath not proceeded from your owne frowardness and unbelieve. The Lord who searched their hearts, and saw the utmost scope of their complaints, found this evill thought lying at the bottome of all, that he surely had put them upon all those difficulties, or brought them into those straites on purpose to breake with them. And therefore, he saith, *Ye shall know my breach of promise;* Ye shall see one day, or at last, whether I have kept covenant, and stood to my engagement or you, whether I have sought an occasion against you, or you have given me occasion to deale with you as I have done. So that when the Lord sayd, *Ye shall know my breach of promise;* his meaning was, ye shall know that I have kept my promise to you exactly, or to a tittle, and that ye only have been the promise-breakers. 'Tis infinitely below the nature of God, to seeke occasions against the creature; And 'tis strange that the Jewes had any the remotest suspicion of him as doing so, after they had heard of those glorious stiles and titles in which he proclaimed his name (*Exod. 34. 6.*) *The Lord, the Lord God, gracious and mercifull, slow to anger, abundant in goodnesse and in truth, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin.* What can be speld out of this name that should yeild the least shaddow of a jealousie, that the Lord would seeke occasions against them. A good Prince desires to finde many good subjects who deserve to be rewarded, but it troubles him to finde any who deserve to be punished, or whom he is necessitated to punish; Now what is the

*Cognoscentia
contradictionem
meam; si dici
passit, latine ixi-
vationem; non
a verbo irrito
sed ab adjectivo
irritus, q.d. vi-
debitur ut ego
omnia astra ve-
stra per hos
quadraginta
annos irrita fa-
ciam, & consti-
tus ac instituta
impediam.*
Merc:

the goodneſſe of the moſt benigne and gracious Princes in the world, to the graciousneſſe and benignity of God! Again, his precious promiſes evidence the unworthineſſe of ſuch a ſurniſe; all which are full of mercy, and goodneſſe, and patience, and pardon, and tenderneſſe to poore ſinners: ſo farre is the Lord from ſeeking occasions to charge any one with what is not, that he ſeekes all the wayes and occasions he can to doe good, and to extend compaſſion to thoſe who have done amiſſe. He even labours to deliver poore ſoules from their dangers, and from their ſins. How farre is he then from deſiring to find them tripping and ſinning, or from urging ſin hardly harſhly or cauſleſſy upon them? yea all the experiences of Saints bring in witneſſ againſt this blaſphemous apprehenſion. They will tell us from what they have found and felt, that when they have given the Lord occaſion to deſtroy them, when they have put a ſword into his hand to ſmite them, when by their unbelieve, and pride, and neglect of knowne duties, they have layd themſelves open to ruine and deſtruction, even then he hath held his hand and ſpared them. Is it not then a great, a groſſe ſin, to charge the Lord, that he ſeekes occasions againſt us? Yea indeed (as was touched before) the Lord needs not ſeek occaſion againſt any man, for as much as the beſt of men give him too much occaſion; and too often. He needs not ſtand to ſpy advantages againſt us, we lay our ſelves too open and naked to him continually. As in Fencing, when two that are very expert at that art are engaged, there is watching for an occaſion or advantage to get the maſtery; but if an expert Maſter of Defence be to deale with an ignorant fellow that knows not his poſtures, nor how to uſe his weapon, he needs not ſeek occaſion, he may have him here and there and every where. It is ſo with the beſt of Saints, when they have to doe with God; He needs not watch for an occaſion where to hit, or ſmite them, for they through their ignorance and folly, lay their naked breſts open to his ſtroakes every day. Were he not infinite in mercy to cover our ſins, and to pardon our tranſgreſſions, we muſt needs periſh under his juſtice.

*Eccē invenit
in me vacilla-
tiones. Scult:
TAN UN vo-
eat ea quæ pij
faciunt præter
reſtum, ſed ci-
tra animum a
deo averſum,
Ecce Coc:*

Again, The word is rendred, *Infirmities, faylings, or leſſer ſins*; that's another tranſlation of the text, and 'tis a uſefull one; For as the former ſuppoſeth the Lord taking occaſion, where none at all was given; ſo this ſuppoſeth him to take the leaſt occaſion.

As

As if *Elihu* supposed *Job* saying, Behold, he seeks out my little faults, *Quæstiv* de-
my vacillations, my trippings, my stumblings, in a word, my infir- *m parva qua-*
mities. We may take them two wayes; First, for his youthfull *dam, imo pene*
sins, the slips of his youth. Secondly, for his dayly sins, common- *nulla peccata*
ly called saylings. As if *Job* had sayd, Though I can charge my *propter quæ,*
selfe, and freely doe with many sins and weaknesses, yet I am not a *velut si nefan-*
man chargeable with any crimes nor wickednesses, mine are no black *da crimina com-*
nor bloody sins, no crimson, no skarlet sins; I have not sinned pre- *misssem, atroci*
sumptuously, or with a high hand, I have not given scope to my lusts, *me sententia*
nor indulged my corruptions. I have not pleased my selfe with dis- *condemnavit.*
pleasing God; nor hath the bent of my soule been to breake his com- **Bold:**
mandements, as bonds, yokes, or shakles put upon me by an enemy;
I have not rejected his dominion or rule over me in any wilfull de-
fection or departure from his word. Yet notwithstanding God findes
out my infirmities and saylings, and urgeth them sorely against
me, yea he deales with me as if I were his enemy, even for those
sins which I have committed through inadvertency or meere humane
frailty: Some Interpreters insist most upon this signification of
the word, as if the matter which *Elihu* charged *Job* with, were
that he should say God carried it towards him as an enemy for
small faults or lesser sins. Nor doe I see any thing which hinders
the joyning of this and the former reading together; for surely
he seekes occasions to punish and vex another, who insists upon
his lesser sins and imperfections, as if they were great and grie-
vous crimes. From this latter or second sence of the word, Ob-
serve, First, in General.

*To take strict notice of the saylings, infirmities, or lesser sins of
others, is a poynt of very great severity.*

Some are pleased with nothing more then to heare and dis-
course of other mens saylings. 'Tis a great fault to be picking
up the lesser faults of others; yet how many are there, who if
they can but see, as it were, any bare place, they will be charg-
ing at it; if they see but the least scratch or sore, they as the
fly, love to be feeding upon it, or raking in it. 'Tis our holinesse
to take notice of the least sin in our selves, and the more holy
any man is, the more quick-sighted and quick-sented he is in
taking notice of his lesser sins (when the least neglect of duty
and of the least negligence in performance of duty, any ill frame

of heart, any vaine thought, any idle word, any undue carriage, any uncomeliness, is taken notice of and corrected, this shewes an excellent frame of spirit, and a great measure of Grace) but it is not good to do so by others, yea it is an argument we are very much wanting and sayling in holiness our selves, when we are so apt to take notice of and aggravate every want and sayling in our brethren. Yea, when as Christ saith (*Math: 7. 3.*) *We see a mote in our brothers eye, we seldome see the beame in our owne.* And it is an argument men have beames in their owne eyes, when they are so quick-sighted in looking after moles in their brothers eye. I grant, it is a duty to be watchfull over one another as brethren, and to take notice, for right ends, of the least saylings and faults of any. This is a duty if we doe it with a purpose to pray for them, that they may walke more circumspectly ; or that we may lovingly reprove, admonish, and counsell them ; as also that we may consider our selves and our owne wayes, lest we fall as they have done. Thus to take notice of the least saylings of others, is a great Gospel duty. But to take notice of mens faults, to censure or defame their persons, to insult over them, or accuse them, this is the spirit of a *Cham*, who mocked at his fathers nakedness. And thus to be criticall about the faults of others, argues that we are careless of our owne.

Secondly, As to the particular case in the text, for which *Job* is tax'd by *Elihu*, that he said thus of God.

Observe.

To say or think of the Lord that he takes a strict and severe notice of our infirmities to reckon with us riggedly for them is very sinfull.

Such thoughts are a great derogation from the goodnesse and mercy of God. The Lord doth not willingly see the faults of his people ; Though he seeth them, yet he doth not willingly see them ; he is glad when it is with his people, as it was at that time with *Israel* (*Numb: 23. 21.*) *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath he seene perversness in Israel.* But was there no sin to be seene in *Jacob* ? Was *Israel* altogether innocent at that time ? Surely they, even they, and even then were a sinfull people, and had their faults, neither few nor small, but because there was no iniquity, no perversness nor prevarication against God

found

found among them at that time, therefore he over-looked all their ordinary saylings and transgressions. As the Lord is so holy and of such pure eyes that he cannot behold any sin, the least iniquity to approve of it (*Habak. 1. 13.*) so the Lord is so gracious and so full of compassion, that he doth not severely take notice of, nor look upon the lesser sins of his people. *David* exalts the name and glory of God at large for this (*Psal. 103. 8, 9, 10.*) *The Lord is mercifull and gracious, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy; he will not alwayes chide.* They are alwayes chiding, that are alwayes spying faults in children, servants or relations; they who take notice of every little fault, shall finde chiding-worke enough in a family. *But the Lord will not alwayes chide; neither will he keepe his anger, for ever; He hath not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities: Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that feare him.* A father doth not enquire into, much lesse punish every neglect of his child. *I will spare them* (saith the Lord) (*Mal. 3. 17.*) *as a father spareth a son that serveth him.* If a father seeth or is well perswaded, that his son hath a heart to serve him, he will not curiously spy out the faults of his service, but saith to his child, *It is well done*, or at least, I take that well which thou hast done. Yea the Lord is so farre from a strict inquiry after such faults, that he passeth by great transgressions (*Mic. 7. 18.*) *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his people; he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.* Though *Asa* (*1 Kings 15. 14.*) was not thorough in the reformation; the high places were not removed, yet the Lord did not charge this upon him, for presently it followeth in the sacred Story; *Nevertheless, the heart of Asa was perfect with God all his dayes.* Yea, though *Asa* did fall into severall sins afterwards, imprisoning one of the Prophets, and oppressing some of the people, and in his sickness seeking to the Physitians, and not to the Lord, yet the Lord did not charge these acts upon him; He was so farre from a strict inquiry after his lesser sins, that he tooke no notice of those greater sins, but saith, *His heart was perfect all his dayes.* So in the case of *David*, the Lord would not see many of his sins, he would not blot *David*, nor burden his owne memory with them, but passed an Act of Oblivion upon them for ever.

Sarah (*Gen: 18. 12.*) spake very unhandsomely when the Angel came to her and told her she should have a son; yet the Apostle (*1 Pet: 3. 6.*) referring to that story, gives *Sarah* a very high testimony or commendation for one good word that was mingled with a great many ill or undue ones, yea and actions too; for *she laughed*; Notwithstanding all which, *Peter* sets her as a patterne for all good women professing the Gospel to imitate: He would have them *be in subjection unto their owne husbands*; even as *Sarah obeyed Abraham calling him Lord, whose daughters ye are* (saith he) *as long as ye doe that which is well.* That one word which she spake well, is recorded, yea reported to her praise, and all that were ill are buried in silence, forgotten and covered. The Lord hath respect to a little pure gold, though mingled with a great deale of dross, and owynes a little good Corne, though a great deale of chaffe be in the same floore or heape. Surely then he will not bring our infirmities and slips to account against us, while our hearts are upright with him.

Thus you see what matter of charge there was in these words, when *Job* sayd, *God sought occasion against him*, when he had given none, or that he had only given some smaller occasion, and yet God dealt with *him as an enemy.*

But did *Job* ever say, That God sought occasions against him, or tooke notice of his lesler sins so severely?

I answer, Though some acquit *Job* wholly of this charge, and recriminate *Elihu* with this accusation as a slander, yet *Job* had spoken words which might give occasion to charge him thus, (as was shewed also concerning those former speeches, *I am cleane from transgression, I am innocent, there is no iniquity in me*): though *Job* had not spoken these or such like words, with that scope and spirit as *Elihu* might seeme to alledge them; yet he had given *Elihu* cause enough to say so, while he spake more of himselfe then came to his share, considering that he was a sinfull man, and more, then did become him in his condition, being an afflicted man. Upon both which accounts, it had better becom'd him to have been much in humbling himselfe, rather then at all in justifying himselfe. Now as *Job* had spoken words which might beare out *Elihu* in his former charge, so we finde severall speeches or complaints concerning God, which may justifie him in this. As for instance (*Chap: 14. 16; 17.*) *For now thou num-*
brest

Secundum veritatem neutrū dicit Job in sensu quem imponit in Elihu.

breſt (ſt numbring thou numbred) my ſteps ; doſt thou not watch over my ſins ? As if he had ſayd, thou watcheſt me ſo ſtrictly, ſo narrowly, that I cannot (in the leaſt) ſtep awry, but preſently I am obſerved and ſhall be ſure to heare of it ; Yea, *my tranſgreſſion is ſealed up in a bag, and thou ſoweſt up mine iniquity ;* that is, thou keepeſt the memory of my ſins, thou doſt not paſſe them by, but haſt them ready by thee. When chaſt *Joſeps* wanton miſtreſſe diſappoynted in her luſt, was reſolved to ſeek an occaſion of revenge, *ſhe layd up his garment by her untill her Lord came home* (Gen: 39. 16.) To lay up the evill deed of another, preſageth ill to him. And therefore when *Elihu* heard *Job* ſpeaking thus, might he not ſay, *Job* hath ſayd, *God ſeeketh occaſions againſt me,* yea, (which is more) as it followeth in the verſe under hand ;

And counteth me for his enemy.

Theſe words having been inſiſted upon ſomewhat largely from other paſſages of this Booke (*Chap: 13. 24. & 19. 11. & Chap: 30. 21.* In all which places *Job* ſpake this complaint ſometimes expreſſely, alwayes Equivalently) I ſhall not here ſtay upon the explication of them, only for as much as *Job* having ſayd, That God took hold of ſmall occaſions given, or ſought occaſions not given, is preſently charged further by *Elihu*, with ſaying, *He counteth me for his enemy.* From this Connection of the former with the latter part of the verſe.

Note.

To ſeek or take eaſie occaſions againſt another, is an argument that we beare no good will to him, or, It is a ſigne we look upon a man as an enemy, when we are apt and ready to ſeek or take occaſions againſt him.

There are two things which we are very ready to doe towards thoſe we beare no good will unto, or whom we account our enemies. Firſt, to diminith the good which they doe, to ſpeak lightly of, and under-value their moſt prayſe-worthy deeds. Ill will never ſpake well either of perſons or actions. Secondly, whom we love not as friends, eſpecially whom we hate as enemies, we are prone to highten their faults, and double their ſayings ; we (moſtly) look on the evill deeds of an enemy in a multiplying, or in a magnifying glaſs ; we make one fault many, and

and a little one great. A true friend will speak the most of what is well done, and the least he can, with truth, of what is ill; He is so farre from seeking occasions against whom he loves, that he will hardly see them, when findes them unfought. A noble enemy will not seeke occasions against a man, much lesse will a cordiall friend. It is no wonder when *Job* is taxed with saying, God sought occasions against him, that he should also say, *He counteth me for his enemy.*

From the matter of these words, *He counteth me for his enemy*, take these two notes.

First, *Even good men when they are sorely grieved under the afflicting hand of God, are tempted to have hard apprehensions of God, at least to suspect and feare that God is no friend to them.*

And this comes to passe upon a double consideration; First, Nature when pinched will shew it selfe; Now, man naturally, hath not only hard thoughts of God, but an enmity against him. And when nature is pinched, all the corruptions working in man, worke this way, unless over-power'd and checkt by grace. Secondly, when 'tis hard with us from the hand of God, then Satan takes his time to prompt us with hard thoughts of God, and to foment that enmity to the uttermost, of which our corrupt nature hath such store. What? will Satan say, *Doth God love thee, and starve thee?* What? Doth God pretend kindness to thee, and deale thus with thee? is God thy friend, who takes away thy friends? is God thy friend, who leaves thee in the hand of enemies? doth he pittie thee, and yet keepe thee in these paines? is this his kindness to his friend? How can he say he loves thee? And hast not thou cause enough yet to say, *He counteth thee for his enemy.* Thus Satan takes his time to provoke nature, which is forward enough of it selfe to thinke and speake hardly of God, if at any time he is pleased and sees it fit to deale hardly with us. And how great a combate hath many a gracious soule both with Satan and his owne heart, to get and keepe up good and honorable thoughts of God in a suffering condition, or under darke and (to sense) dismal dispensations.

Secondly, Note.

What-

Whatsoever God doth to or with a godly man, he should maintaine good thoughts, and speak well of God, or, when God deales most strictly and severely with his people, they should not look upon it as an argument of any enmity or ill will against them, or that he counteth them his enemies.

Let us take heed of such thoughts; *David* professed (*Psal: 73.*
1.) *Truly God is good to Israel, even to them that are of a cleane heart.* He is good to them (that's *David's* intent there) not only when he doth them good, (as to outward things I meane, and to sensible appearances, for all is good in the issue to the *Israel* of God; now, I say, God is good to his people, not only when he in that sence doth them good) but when he afflicteth them, and layeth many outward evils upon them. When, as it is said after in that *Psalm* (*v. 14.*) *He plagueth them (that word imports forest troubles) all the day long, and chasteneth them every morning;* when he gives them their breakfast in sowre herbes, or with severest whippings, yet then, even then he is good to them, and meanes them no harme at all. Therefore how hardly soever God deals with us, let us not thinke he counts us enemies. The Temptation was strong upon *David* to take up hard thoughts of God in that case, yea it prevailed so farre upon him, that he concluded (*v. 13.*) *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vaine, and washed my hands in innocency.* As if he had sayd, A man hath little priviledge from the worst of outward evils by his godliness; But the Temptation did not prevaile long, he soone recovered himselfe (*v. 15.*) *If I say I will speak truth, (that is, that I have cleansed my heart in vaine) Behold, I should offend against the generation of thy children;* that is, I should wrong the whole kind or race of godly men throughout the world, as if hypocrites, or as if God did not love them, or were not good to them, for who is there among all thy children whom either thou hast not or mayest not chasten as much as thou hast chastened me. As no man can know the love of God by that which is before him, how prosperous soever it is; so it is most unfutable for any of the children of God, to thinke that God is not good to them, or doth not love them, because of the evill that is before them, how adverse or disasterous soever it is. For, God having loved his people in Christ, he loves them for ever; when once he hath
broken

broken the enmity in our hearts towards himselfe, there is nothing shall ever be done by him towards us, which may speak us his enemies, or him our enemy, though a *Job* in great affliction may say, *He counteth me for his enemy*, And handles me like one too; as it followeth.

Vers. 11. *He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths.*

We had these words expressly (*Chap. 13. 27.*) there they have been opened already, *Thou puttest my feet also in the stocks, and lookest narrowly unto all my pathes.* That which hath been said as to the Generall sence and scope of that text, may serve for this; And therefore I referre the reader thither. I shall only adde two or three notes from the metaphor; *He put my feet in the stocks*, that is, he presseth me with very close and sore afflictions.

Hence Observe.

First, *To be in affliction, is to be in a painfull condition; there is little ease in the stocks.*

No chastning for the present seemeth to be joyous but grievous (*Heb. 12. 11.*) To be under a crosse is be under a burden.

Secondly, *Afflictions keepe us under restraint.* He hath little liberty as well as little ease that is in the stocks: afflictions hold us in, they are as a prison to us. Afflictions are a restraint two wayes; First, to our corruptions; yea, through the grace of God, afflictions are more then restraints to corruption, they become the death of corruption, they are appoynted (among other services) for the mortifying of corruption, that it may not live in us, much more are they a restraint to corruption, that it may not get out, nor worke in us as before. Many times, when a good man hath the world at will, his corruptions thinke to have their will too; and when he is at liberty, lusts would grow licentious: Therefore God seeth it necessary to put his servants in the stocks, that their lusts may be in the stocks too. Thus he told the Church (*Hos. 2. 6.*) *Behold, I will hedge up thy way with thornes, and make a wall that she shall not find her paths.* The thorne-hedge was as a stocks to stop them that they should not walk disorderly, nor act inordinately as they had done. This course God takes with

with many, he puts them in the stocks, that he may keepe them from the wayes of sin, or give check to some unruly affection. When we need this discipline, we may looke for it, and 'tis a mercy to be under it. Will you not keep order? (saith God) then you shall to the stocks. Secondly, afflictions are a restraint to our comforts, as well as to our corruptions. As this expression notes the taking of lusts short, so the taking of us short as to lawfull liberties and enjoyments. Sickness upon the body lowres all that this world hath, to us, and will not suffer us to use much of it, how much soever of it we possesse. Many have enough to eate, who never eate in pleasure, as *Job* sayd (*Chap. 31. 25.*) And when in our prosperity we run out and take unlawfull liberty, God sends an affliction, as his stocks, to hold us from our lawfull liberties. When we have had vaine out-goings and excesses of spirit, all going well with us and comfortably in the world, we may expect the stocks next, or that things should goe ill with us, yet for our good.

Thirdly, To be in the stocks is a disgracefull thing; it is not only a paine and a restraint, but it is a reproof; He that is in the stocks, or in the pillory, is exposed to shame, every one points at him, and many revile him. Affliction as to the eye of the world, carrieth a disgrace with it, or, at least, subjects the person afflicted to disgrace; And it hath been shewed from severall passages of this booke, how *Job's* afflictions were interpreted to his disgrace; and he lookt upon, as I may say, like a vagabond in the stocks, that God had brought him thither, and clapt him by the heeles for his misdemeanours. Though afflictions diminish no mans honour or esteeme with God, or with his people (an afflicted Saint is as precious and honorable in their eyes, as when in the greatest prosperity; The clouds of trouble cannot eclipse the glory of Grace, nor render the gracious contemptible to those who know them such) yet, as to the eye and opinion of worldly men they doe. *Job* sayd his afflictions were a witness against him, as if all were not right with him, yea, as if he had been very unrighteous. The stocks are a witness against a man, that surely he hath done some ill thing. Thus you see there is paine in affliction, restraint in affliction, disgrace in affliction, especially in the opinion of the world, and therefore to be in affliction is to be as in the stocks. *He putteth my feet in the stocks.*

He marketh all my paths.

Which ſome expound, as if when the Lord had let him out of the ſtocks, yet he was but like a priſoner with his keeper at his heels; *He marketh all my paths.* I have ſpoken to this alſo before; I ſhall now only Note.

There is no ſtepping out of the eye or ſight of God.

He markes all our paths, not only our open paths, but our ſecret paths; not only what paths our feet walke in, but paths our hearts walke in. He marketh what our thoughts are, what our ſcope is, what our aymes and ends are. He marketh not only our day-paths, but our night-paths; *He watcheth all our paths.* Take this Caution from it;

As the Lord marks all our paths, ſo it will be our wiſdome to mark our owne paths.

If the Lords eye be ſo ſtrict over all our wayes, ſhall we be careleſſe of our wayes? If he look upon our walkings, ſhall not we look to our walkings? There are many arguments (from love, from returns of thankfulneſſe for received benefits) which ſhould provoke the people of God to heed and marke their own wayes; but ſurely this ought to be a very cogent argument, becauſe God marks them, *He marketh all our paths.* Therefore as the Apoſtle gives counſel and admonition (*Eph. 5. 15.*) *See that ye walke circumspectly, not as fooles but as wiſe.* What our wiſdome is, yea whether we have any wiſdome, whether we are wiſe or fooles will be ſeene by our walkings. Some can talke and diſcourſe very wiſely, who yet walke very fooliſhly, and whoſe whole courſe is folly.

So much for the opening of this charge brought by *Elihu* againſt *Job*, his over-juſtifying of himſelfe, and his reflecting upon the goodneſſe and love of God. *Elihu* proceeds yet further to deale with and refute him, as alſo to anſwer for God. *Behold, in this thou art not juſt, &c.* This I charge thee with and will prove it, thou haſt ſpoken ſinfully and unbecommingly of God and of thy ſelfe in all this.

J O B. Chap. 33. Vers. 12, 13.

*Behold, in this thou art not just: I will answer thee,
That God is greater then man.*

*Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not
account of any of his matters.*

IN these two verses *Elihu* gives the first part of his answer, wherein we may take notice of these five things; First, He tells *Job* that he had erred and was mistaken, *Behold, in this thou art not just*. Secondly, He sheweth him wherein he had been mistaken, or what his error was; *In this thou art not just*, or, *Behold this, thou art not just in it*. Thirdly, *Elihu* lays downe the generall ground, upon which he intended to convince *Job* of his error and mistake, The greatnesse of God, *I will answer thee that God is greater then man*. Fourthly, from that ground he drawes out a check or reproofe, in the beginning of the 13th verse, *Why dost thou strive against him?* Fifthly and lastly, He gives a reason of that reproofe, which ariseth also out of the former ground, the unquestionable Sovereignty of God; *For he giveth not account of any of his matters*.

Vers. 12. *Behold, in this, thou art not just.*

Behold, he calls for serious attention, and diligent consideration; *Behold This*; so the Hebrew rendred strictly; we render, *Behold, in this thou art not just*; What is this? what's the antecedent to this? we may assigne the antecedent in three things, or make it three-fold, according to what *Elihu* hath layd downe before in way of charge against *Job* in the former Context; First, *This*, that thou hast boasted thy selfe so much of thy innocency and integrity. Vers. 8th. *Thou hast spoken in my hearing, and I have heard the voyce of thy words, saying, I am cleane without transgression, &c.*

Behold, in this thou art not just.

Secondly, *In this*; That is, in that thou hast complained so
G g 2 much

much of the severity of Gods dealings and proceedings with thee, (10. & 11.) *Behold, he findeth occasion against me, and accounteth me for his enemy ; He putteth my feet in the stocks, he marketh all my paths ; Behold, in this thou art not just.*

Hoc nomine justum non es, quod deum in jus provocare ausus es. Merc:

There is a third antecedent, which we may take up from severall passages in the former part of the Booke ; and that is, because thou hast so often and so importunately desired to plead with God, and hast made so many suites for a hearing with him, as if thou hadst somewhat to say, which might acquit thy selfe and shew reason, why God should not deale thus with thee ; For though *Job* did not desire to plead with God as having any intent to accuse him of doing him wrong, yet he was therefore to be blamed, because he desired to plead with him ; seeing it becomes man to submit to the judgement of God without murmuring or complaining. So then *Elihu* had cause to charge him with this ; God indeed passed it by, as knowing it did not proceed (as in the wicked) from malice, but from weakness and ignorance, as *Job* also himselfe humbly confessed at last. *Behold (thou hast too often called for Justice) in this thou art not just.*

Mr Broughton renders, *Loe here thou art not in the right.* These words, *in this, or here*, may also have a negative reference to what *Job* had been charged with before by his friends. As if *Elihu* had sayd ; *I doe not charge thee with such crimes as thy friends have loaded thee with heretofore, I doe not burden thee with grosse impiety, nor with hypocrisie, I doe not tell thee thou hast oppressed the poore, or wronged the widdow and the fatherlesse, I have nothing of this sort to say against thee. But in this or here, I have somewhat to say, wherein my judgement also is that thou art not just, nor in the right ; for however thou art otherwise, or in other things upright and righteous, however just thou hast been in thy transactions with men, and pure in thy worship toward God, yet in this I am sure, and I dare say it openly and avowedly, thou art no wayes justifiable, much lesse just in that thou hast cryed up thy owne innocency, and spoken so much of the hard dealings of God with thee ; yea, hast been so bold as to desire a day of hearing even before God himselfe. Let this be the Question or matter under debate ; whether or no, Job speaking thus highly of himselfe, and thus boldly of God, hath done right or no ? Elihu undertakes the negative, he engageth to prove that Job had not done well, or right, how innocent soever he was, in speaking*

so much of his own innocency, or (how hardly soever God dealt with him) in making so many complaints of his severity, *Elihu* undertakes to prove this negative ; and *Job* never durst undertake the affirmative, that he had done right or well in speaking or doing so ; and therefore in the close of the business he sits downe convinced, that he had been too bold with God, and too forward in justifying himselfe.

His argument (which runs through this whole discourse) to make good his negative assertion, may be formed up thus ; *He that speakes much of his owne righteousness, and seemes to reflect upon the righteousness of God, at least that God hath been over-rigorous with him, is not just, nor justifiable in this.*

But thou O Job hast spoken thus of thy selfe, and thus of God in the extremity of thy paine, and in the anguish of thy spirit.

Therefore in this thou art not just, nor justifiable. No man of understanding can take thy part, or be an Advocate for thee in this matter ; As for me, I must needs be and am resolved to be an Advocate for God against thee. The Major or first proposition is not exprest in the text, the conclusion is given in the beginning of the 12th verse, and the assumption or 2d proposition, is collected from *Job's* owne mouth in severall places of this Booke.

Again, besides the generall scope of the words, and the tendency of *Elihu* in this dispute, we may consider the manner of his speech, how he deales with *Job* ; *Behold, in this thou art not just.* In this manner of treating with *Job*, the sweetness of his spirit, and likewise the boldness of it are observable. These two virtues or excellencies of an Advocate, shew themselves plainly in this one passage ; *Behold, in this thou art not just.* For consider, First, He expresseth his reproofe negatively, he doth not say, *Behold, in this thou art wicked, or thou hast impiouly blasphem'd the name of God,* but he speakes at as low a rate, as may be, *Behold, in this thou art not just, or justifiable,* thou hast not done right, or thou art not right ; there is a great good temper of spirit, and a mixture of much meekness in such negative expressions : it being much lesse to say to a man, *in this thou art not just nor justifiable,* then to say positively or directly, in this thou art unjust ; and deserveest to be condemned. For though there be no difference in the thing between not being just and being unjust, yet there is much more mildness in the words ; and a man takes lesse offence,

when

when told that he is not just, then in being told that he is unjust. The imputing of a crime to a man, is more and worse, then the denying him a vertue, or that he is vertuous.

Hence note.

We ought to temper our reproofes with much gentlenesse and meeknesse.

We should not speake cutting words, if other words will serve the turne. Thus the Apostle directs us (*Gal: 6. 1.*) *Brethren, if a man be overtaken with a fault, ye which are spirituall, restore such a one with the spirit of meeknesse, considering thy selfe, lest thou also be tempted ; deale as gently with a fallen brother, as thou wouldest with a man whose bones are dislocated or broken. (so much the metaphor there used imports) There is a time indeed when we must rebuke (as the Apostle gives direction (*Tit: 1. 13.*) sharply, or cuttingly ; we must goe to the quicke, that they may be found in the faith : but there is a great regard to be had to the state and spirits of those with whom we have to deale. As it is our duty to receive the word with meeknesse (*James 1. 21.* some receive the word proudly, riggidly, in the worst sence they can, yea they receive it rebellingly, now as we ought to receive the word with meeknesse) so 'tis good to speake the word with meeknesse, with as much meeknesse and tendernesse as the case will beare.*

Secondly, consider this manner of speaking; *Behold, in this thou art not just ; Elihu* tells him plainly of his faults, he reported them before, and here he applyed them home to his person ; *Behold, in this, thou rememberest thy owne words ; Thou canst not but take notice what thou hast spoken ; now I tell thee, in this thing thou art not just ; Elihu* doth not speak doubtingly nor fearefully, nor doth he tell *Job* what the thoughts of others were upon the matter, but he tells him directly, categorically, plainly from himselfe, *in this thou art not just.*

Hence note.

We are to hold out our convictions and reproofes with plainnesse, and to lay our finger upon the very sore ; Behold, in this (or that) thou art not just.

We are to speake meekly, but not at randome, nor uncertainly,

ly, not flatteringly (*Pro: 29. 25.*) *A man that flattereth his neighbour, spreadeth a net for his feete*; he doth but intangle and inſnare him, in ſtead either of counſelling or comforting him. When a man is out, it is beſt to tell him ſo; how elſe ſhall he get in againe? Flattering words are inſnaring words; *Behold, in this thou art not right.* One of the Ancients ſpeaking to this poynt, *Majore ſuppli-* tells us; *It is more ſinfull to flatter thoſe that doe evill, then to doe* cio dignus eſt *evill our ſelves.* And, ſurely it argueth a more corrupt mind, or a qui male agen- *ter laudat; quam* worſer principle to dawbe ſinners with the untempered mortar qui male agit. of flattery, then to be dawbed with the mire of any particular ſin Chryſoſt: or iniquity. A flatterer is a dawber and pillow-fower; A flatterer hath not a true ſight of ſin himſelfe, and he doth what he can to keepe others from the ſight of it. It is ſafer to make ſinners ſmart then itch. *David* invited a wounding rather then ſuch a ſkinning of his ſore (*Pſal: 141. 5.*) *Let the righteous ſmite me, it ſhall be a kindneſs,* (that is, I will not only take it kindly, but ſhall find it a kindneſs) *and let him reprove me, and it ſhall be an excellent oyle,* which ſhall breake my head; that is, it ſhall be ſo farre from hurting that it ſhall be (through Grace) a healing to me. No man had ever any cauſe to repent, either the giving or receiving of a wiſe and ſeaſonable reproofe.

Behold, in this thou art not juſt.

But what is it, not to be juſt? I anſwer, not to be juſt, is not to give every man his due; yet *Elihu* intends it chiefly, of what *Job* had ſpoken unduely to God; *Behold, in this thou art not juſt.*

Hence note.

They who doe not give God his right are unjuſt, as well as they who doe not give men their right.

Yea not to give God his right, is by ſo much the greater injuſtice, then not to give man his right, by how much God is greater then man; looke how much God is higher and greater then man, by ſo much is their ſin higher and greater, who give not God his right, then theirs, who give not man his right. Many thinke they are very juſt, very honeſt men, becauſe they give every man his due, they wrong, they defraud no man; nor any neighbour, nor any brother with whom they deale: come and charge them if you can. 'Tis very good, & more then moſt men can truly ſay of themſelves,

themselves, when a man is able to say he is just to his neighbour, no man can challenge him of injustice. But many say this, who take no notice, how unjust they are to God; they are not at all sensible, how often they have denied God his right, nor how often they have done God wrong; they take no notice of this. They have second-table Justice, but they have not first-table Justice; this is it that *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with. His friends charged him with second-table injustice, that he was an oppressor, &c. but *Elihu* charged him with first-table injustice, that he had done wrong to God. Therefore, remember, not to give God his due feare, his due love, his due trust and submission (these are his rights by the first Commandement) is to be unjust; not to give God due worship according to his will, is to be unjust, because in so doing you deny him his right in the second Commandement; not to speake or thinke reverently of the name, of the word, wayes, and ordinances of God, is to be unjust to God, because you deny him his right in the third Commandement. To breake the Sabboath, to steale Gods time, and convert it to your owne private use, to put it in your owne purses, as many doe, this is sacrilege, this is to be unjust to God, because you give him not his right, nor that which is due to him by the fourth Commandement; so not to submit to the rod of God, not to be quiet under the chastizings of God, not to take all well at Gods hand whatsoever he doth with us, or to us, is to be unjust to God, because we then deny him the right of his sovereignty, and of that just power which he hath over his creatures.

Behold, in this thou art not just.

Elihu proceeds to give an account, distinctly, wherein this injustice lay.

I will answer thee, or (as Mr Broughton) I will tell thee, God is greater then man.

We render well, *I will answer thee*, &c. There is a four-fold way of answering; First, by information to a Question propounded. Every Question would have an answer. Secondly, by solution of an objection made; When any thing is objected against what is sayd or held; then to untie the knot, is to answer. Thirdly, there is an answering by confutation of a false opinion or tenet;

net ; thus whole bookes that hold unfoind or heterodox opinions, are to be answered ; Fourthly, there is an answer by way of reproofe, or reprehension of faults or mistakes, either in speech or practice. *Elihu* his answer was of this last sort. For he observing how *Job* had spoken, and what his carriage and demeanour had been, gives him a reprehensive answer, *Behold, in this thou art not just, I will answer thee.* And what was his answer ? even this, *God is greater then man* ; or, *I will answer thee, that God is more then man* ; The roote of the word signifies to encrease or grow Great ; but God is great, not by growth or encrease, but in his essence and being. He who is infinite in greatness, can have no addition to his greatness. God is the Great one, and he only is great. All men and things put together, are not only little nothings, but lesse then nothing compared to the Great God. Further, the word by which God is here exprest, notes the great power of God, the strength of God ; in opposition to which the word by which *man* is here exprest, notes his weakness and pitifull frailty. And therefore Mr *Broughton* translates strictly according to the propriety of the Originall ; *I must tell thee the puissant is greater then the sorrowfull man* ; we say barely, God, he, the puissant, or the strong, the mighty God ; we say, *God is greater then man*, he, *then sorrowfull man*. There are three originall words, as I have sometime noted, which expresse *man* ; *Adam*, importing the matter of which man was made, *earth* ; *Ish* noting his best perfection ; and *Enosh*, intimating that sad condition which was brought upon us by the fall ; *Surely the puissant is greater then sorrowfull man*.

Respondebo tibi et reprehendam, idq; hac plane insolubiliratione quia amplior est deus et major multū parvis hominibus
יִרְכָּהוּ i. e. amplior est. Merc:

But is not God greater then (*Ish*) The wisest and most accomplished, the most perfect and mightiest of men, as well as he is greater then (*Enosh*) *sorrowfull or miserable man* ? I answer, the word *Enosh* is not to be taken exclusively, as if when he saith, *the puissant is greater then the sorrowfull man*, he were not also greater then the greatest or strongest man ; but it notes, that all men, or man considered in his best estate, is but weakness and wretchedness, when put in the ballance with the great God, or the puissant. Lord what is man (saith *David*, one of the best and greatest of men, a King, *Psal.* 144. 3.) *that thou takest knowledge of him ? or the son of man that thou makest account of him ?* Now if it be even too much that God should make any account of man,

H h then

then what is any man in account to God? O what man or Angel is able to cast up the account, how much the great God is *greater or more then man*. The words are plaine, only there is somewhat yet to be added or touched upon, to cleare up further the scope of *Elihu* in speaking thus to *Job*, which I shall endeavour to cleare and make out, when I have given a note or two from the words, as they are a plaine proposition; *God is greater then man*.

Hence Observe.

First, *God is Great*.

He that is greater then the Greatest, is certainly great; he that is higher then the highest, is high. This greatness of God is every where celebrated in Scripture. The Prophet (*Isa: 12. 6.*) calls *the inhabitant of Zion to cry out and shout*; why? *For great is the holy One of Israel in the midst of thee*; that is, the holy one of *Israel* who is in the midst of thee, is both Great in himselfe, and declares his greatness in thee. (*Mal: 1. 14.*) *I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadfull among the heathens*. I need not stay to give particular Scriptures to hold forth the attribute of Gods greatness, his greatness runs through all his attributes. Whatsoever God is, he is great in it; He is great in power (*Psal: 56. 3. Psal: 147. 5.*) he is great in all sorts of power, great in authoritative power, and great in executive power. As God commandeth what he pleaseth to be done, so he can doe what he commandeth. The power of man in doing is not alwayes commensurate with his power in commanding; but Gods is. He needs no helpe, much lesse any leave to execute what he willeth. Again, God is great in wisdom, he hath the compasse of all things in his understanding; God is so wise, that he is called *the only wise God* (*1 Tim: 1. 17.*) The wisdom of men and Angels is folly to his. God is great also in his goodness, so great that Christ himselfe as man would not be called good, but told him that called him so by way of rebuke, *There is none good but one, that is God* (*Math: 19. 17.*) Holy David brake out into the admiration of that goodness which God hath layd up, yea of that which he dayly worketh for man. How much more did he and ought we to admire that goodness which is not so much in himselfe as himselfe? (*Psal: 31. 19.*) *O how great is thy goodness; which thou hast layd up for them that feare thee, which thou*

workest

workeſt for them that truſt upon thee before the ſons of men. The goodneſſe which God adts and puts forth for the creature, is a great goodneſſe (*Iſa: 63. 7. Neh: 9. 25.*) but that goodneſſe which is the goodneſſe of his nature, is a goodneſſe as great as God is, a goodneſſe infinite in greatneſſe. Again, how often is God called great, yea admired for his greatneſſe *in mercy*? When *David* (*2 Sam: 24. 14.*) made choyce to fall into the hands of God; he gave this reaſon of it, *For his mercies are great.* He is alſo great in wrath; we read (*2 Kings 23. 26.*) of *the fierceneſſe of his great wrath.* And how great is his Love? Firſt, in redeeming us by Chriſt (*Joh: 3. 16.*) *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, &c.* God loved us ſo much in that gift, that no man could ever tell how much love he hath given us in it. Secondly, His love is great in quickning us with Chriſt (*Eph: 2. 4.*) *God who is rich in mercy, for the great Love wherewith he hath loved us, even when we were dead in ſins, hath quickned us together with Chriſt.* His love both in redeeming and quickning us is ſo great, that while we are called to the greateſt ſtudy after the knowledge of, we are told we cannot know the greatneſſe of it, (*Eph: 3. 18.*) *That you may know the Love of God which paſſeth knowledge.* I will not ſtay upon this Attribute, the Greatneſſe of God, onely take theſe five briefe inferences from it; *God is Great.* Then

Firſt, *God can doe great things, the greateſt things, for us; every thing is in working as it is in being;* they that are but little, can doe but little; God being great in his being, that is, in his power, in his wiſdome, in his goodneſſe, in his mercy, how eaſily can he doe great things! The Scripture is abundant in ſhewing forth the great things which God hath done, and will doe, *2 Sam: 7. 22, 23. Job 5. 9. Pſal: 71. 19. Pſal: 86. 10. Pſal: 92. 5. Pſal: 111. 2. Pſal: 126. 2, 3. Pſal: 136. 7, 17. Joel 2. 21.* The workes of God in all ages and in all places, have borne the ſtamp of and given teſtimony to his excellent Greatneſſe. We ſay, *There is nothing great to a great mind, or to a man of a great ſpirit.* A Great ſpirited man will overcome not only great difficulties, but ſeeming impoſſibilities, yea he is glad to meete with greateſt difficulties, becauſe they match the greatneſſe of his mind. Then certainly the Great God, doth nothing but great, and can doe the greateſt things. 'Tis no matter how great the things are which

we have need to be done for us, if we can but interest the Great God in the doing of them. God can doe great things in wayes of mercy for his people, and he can doe great things in wayes of Judgement against his enemies. Though his enemies be Great Oakes and Cedars, he can hew them downe (*Amos 2.9.*) Though his enemies be as great as the greatest mountaines, he can remove and level them; *Who art thou O great mountaine before Zorobabell, thou shalt become a plaine* (*Zeck: 4. 7.*) that is, the great power of God, with *Zorobabell*, can overthrow or overturne those powers which oppose or stand in the way of his Church and people, though they appeare as inseparable and immoveable as a Great Mountaine.

Secondly, If *God be Great*, then he can pardon great transgressions; you that are great sinners feare not. Were not God a great God, the least of our sins could not be pardoned; were not he great in mercy, and great in goodnesse, our hearts would fayle us, yea our faith could have no bottome to come to him for the pardon of our great sins; But why should great sins discourage us to aske their pardon of God, who is great in mercy? *David* made the greatnesse of his sin his argument to move the Lord to pardon it (*Psal: 25. 11.*) *Pardon my sin for it is great*; who could speak thus, unlesse he had that upon his heart that he spake to the great God, who is greater in nothing, and hath magnified his greatnesse in nothing more then in acts of mercy to Greatest sinners?

Thirdly, If God be a great God; then he must have great services and duties; He must have great praise (*Psal: 48. 1.*) *great is the Lord and greatly to be praised*; he must have great love, we must love him even with all our heart, and with all our might. He must have great feare (*Psal: 89. 7.*) Great faith (*Math: 15. 28.*) Great honour from all his people. When *David* was about to make great preparations for the building of the Temple, he saith (*1 Chron: 29. 11.*) *Thine O Lord is greatnesse, and the power, and the glory, &c.* And when *Solomon* was about to build the Temple, he saith (*2 Chron: 2. 5.*) *The house which I build is great, for great is our God above all Gods.* We see *David* prepared and *Solomon* builded in proportion to the God for whom the one prepared and the other built a house. Thus I may say of all you doe for God or to God, let it be the greatest your stocke and ability

can reach to, because he is a great God. The Lord himselfe useth that argument by the Prophet to urge his people to doe their utmost in whatsoever they were called to doe (*Mal: 1. 14.*) *Cursed be the deceiver which hath a male in his flocke, and voweth and sacrificeth to the Lord a corrupt thing;* (that is, who when he is able to performe a greater service to the Lord, puts him off with a lesser one) *for I am a great King, saith the Lord of hosts, &c.* Therefore take heed of putting me off with weake female services, I expect a male, your best, that service which is most spirituall and masculine.

Fourthly, If God be great, then, they who are but little themselves, having an interest in God, may doe great things too. The least creature having an interest in the great God, is as great, yea infinitely greater then the greatest in the world, who stand in their owne strength. *Moses* saith (*Deut: 4. 38. Deut: 7. 1.*) that the presence of God with *Israel* was such, that by it they overcame Nations, greater and mightier then they; their littleness did not hinder them, because the great God was with them in their workes and wayes; yea God loves to use small instruments, that his owne greatnesse who is the efficient may appeare. That question which was twice put in the Prophet (*Amos 7. 2, 5.*) is very often put in that case; *By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small.* That which made it so questionable whether *Jacob* should rise, was his smallness; And could we remember the Greatness of the God of *Jacob*, we should either never make such questions, or easily answer them.

Fifthly, Seeing God is great, we should be alwayes ascribing greatnesse to God, we should lift him up in his greatnesse. Thus *Moses* exhorted others (*Deut: 32. 3.*) *Because I will publish the name of the Lord, ascribe ye greatnesse to our God.* And *David* at once prophecieth the same of others, and promiseth it for himselfe (*Psal: 145. 6.*) *Men shall speake of thy terrible Acts, and I will declare thy greatnesse.*

Again, Consider these words as they are expressed comparatively, *God is greater then man*; As God is great, so greater then the greatest men. God is great above all Gods; that is, above all the Kings and Princes of the earth. *Now I know* (sayd *Jethro*, *Exod: 18. 11.*) *that God is greater then all Gods* (greater then *Pharaoh* and his *Egyptian Princes*) *for in the thing wherein they dealt*

dealt proudly he was above them. David challenged all the Gods on Gods behalfe (*Psal. 77. 13.*) *Who is so great a God as our God?* Let any man name him if he can; He is a God above all Gods, that is, above the greatest powers in this world who are called Gods. Thus Christ comforts believers with an assurance of safety for ever (*John 10. 29.*) *My father is greater then all*, then the devill and all.

But some may say, who knoweth not this that God is Great, or that he is greater then men or devills? *Job* himselfe spake much of this subject, yea his friends made it their businesse to exalt the greatnesse of God, as we may see in severall passages of this Booke. So that *Elihu* seemeth to say no more here, then had been sayd already, and doth no more then hath been done already. Is not this then a cold way of arguing to tell *Job* that which he knew already?

For answer to this I shall stay a while (as was promised) before I goe off from these words, to shew why though for the matter this is no more then hath been sayd already; that, yet *Elihu* had reason to bring this argument for the conviction of *Job*, that *God is greater then man*; for though the Greatnesse of God hath been often spoken of in the course of this disputation, between *Job* and his friends, yet neither *Job* nor his friends did handle or improve it to that poynt, or in that extent, as here intended by *Elihu*, as may appeare by these following Considerations.

First, When *Elihu* spake of the greatnesse of God, we are not to understand this greatnesse abstractly or alone, but concreetely or in conjunction with his goodnesse and righteousness, with his mercy and faithfulness, &c. *Job* confessed the greatnesse of God; but he seemed to intimate severall things, to the disparagement of the goodnesse, mercy, and righteousness of God. For though in his frequent complainings he did not question, yet he did much darken and obscure these Divine perfections. And therefore *Elihu* speaking of the Greatnesse of God, urgeth it in conjunction with all his perfections, and indeed they cannot be dis-joyned, except in notion or discourse.

Secondly, *Elihu* insisted so much upon the greatnesse of God, to humble *Job*, and to convince him that he had done amisse, in his bold appeales to him and complaints, about his dealing with him. *Elihu* doth wisely to hold out the greatnesse and sovereignty

raignty of God, for the keeping downe and repressiō of his yet, unhumblēd spirit.

Thirdly, *Elihu* mannageth this argument for another end and purpose, then his friends did. They uted it to prove *Job* was wicked or had done wickedly in the former passages of his life; He to shew that *Job* ought to be patient under and quietly submit to the present providences of God.

Fourthly, This argument which *Elihu* brings from the greatnesse of God, hath not at all the lesse force in it, because grounded upon to common and generally received a principle, *the greatnesse of God*; yea, it hath therefore the greater force in it; for what is more unreasonable then for man to intimate any thing which reflects upon God, or to complaine of what God doth; when as God, by the common consent of all reasonable men, doth infinitely surpasse all men, both in greatnesse, and in righteousness, both in Justice, and in goodnesse. When the greatnesse of God appeares in all these things, what can be more unreasonable then for man to insinuate any thing complainingly concerning God. From the consideration of this scope which *Elihu* had in arguing from the greatnesse of God;

Note.

We may speake and believe aright, that God is great, and that he is greater then man, and yet not answer it in our practise, nor be duly affected with it.

Elihu did not at all question whether *Job* thought God greater then himselfe; that was not the poynt in controversie: but he saw this principle was not answered in *Jobs* practise, or that he did not demeane himselfe suitably to the Greatnesse of God, which he had proclaimed to others, and professed himselfe to believe. And thus it is with many, most of all with those under great temptations and pressing afflictions. How apt are they to speake and act below, yea beside those principles which they believe and hold forth in their profession. It is an easie matter to say, and in words to acknowledge what God hath revealed himselfe to be, but O how hard is it to live and walke up to such sayings and acknowledgements? Many tell us, God is greater then man, yet while they doe not fully subject themselves to God, they in effect deny that God is greater then man. Many acknowledge fully
that

that God is righteous, yet when they rest not in his dealings with them, they imply some unrighteousnesse in God. Many say God is wise, only wise, yet while they will be their owne carvers, and are unsatisfied with Gods allowances and providences, they make themselves wiser then God, or at least imagine things might be ordered with Greater wisdom then they are. Many say God is great in mercy, greater infinitely then man, yet when they should act faith about the pardon of their sins, they act it as if God had but the mercy of a man, or as if his *thoughts were as our thoughts, and his wayes* (in dispensing favours) *like our wayes*, and so they bring God downe to their owne size and scantlings. If these had been asked the question, whether God hath not greater mercy then man, they would have answered, doubtlesse he hath ; and yet they are no more in believing, then if the mercy of God were of the same measure with the mercies of narrow-hearted man. Thus we modle the Great God, and our Idea's or apprehensions of him according to what we see in our selves, not according to what he is and hath said of himselfe. And what are our rightest notions of God, but hoverings in the ayre, till we bring them downe into practise, or live up to them, till every thing we doe be an exposition of what we speake and believe of God. And when we believe indeed that God is greater then man, we make our selves just nothing before God : if we are any thing to our selves, or glory in any thing of our owne, be it little or great before God, we do not give God the glory of his greatnesse. The Lord speaking of his owne greatnesse by the Prophet, saith, *All nations are but as the drop of the bucket to him, yea they are as a little thing, as nothing, lesse then nothing* ; if therefore you make not every thing little, yea nothing before God, you detract from the glory of his greatnesse. Againe, they only acknowledge God in his greatnesse, who both agree to all he doth as just, and receive it as good, yea as best, how bad soever it be to nature, or bitter to their sence. Once more, they only acknowledge God fully in his greatnesse, who though God changeth and varieth his dispensations every day with them, though he empty them never so often from vessell to vessell, yet sit downe and say, God is unchangeable to them. It is because the Lord changeth not that we are not consumed (*Mal: 3. 6.*) therefore what changes soever his people meete with, his heart and thoughts towards them are not changed.

Secondly,

Secondly, Note.

The very reason why we doe not stoop to God in silence, why we doe not suffer him quietly to doe with us and dispose of us how he will, is, because we doe not lay to heart as we ought the greatnesse of God.

Did we remember, that the great God is great in goodnesse, and great in wisdom, as well as great in power ; in a word, did we, when we say God is great, and greater then any man, know what we say, it would presently stop our mouthes, and for ever silence all our discontents & complainings, whether in reference to our personall or the publick concernments. We may pray that God would remove any affliction or evill that is upon us (to doe is so not only our liberty but our duty) but we may not complaine of any affliction, as an evill to us, nor would we ever make such a complaint, if our hearts were taken up with this thought, that God is great in Goodnesse. Why doe we say, at any time, Surely we have suffered enough, or too much already ? Why doe we demand so curiously wherefore God should use such severity against us ? What is the reason of all this ? even this, we doe not consider enough of his greatnesse. *All our inward troubles at our outward troubles arise from this, because we doe not enough believe or not remember who God is.* We by our ignorance and unbelieve divest God (as much as in us lyeth) of his great goodnesse and wisdom, when we feare, especially when we conclude, things are not ordered for our good. And though every man is ready to say, he loathes yea trembles at such thoughts, yet we may lodge many such guests before we are aware. *Whensoever we are overgrieved at any affliction, our owne or others, or would (without much free submission to the will of God) have things goe otherwise then they doe, we, upon the matter, make our selves greater and wiser then God.* And though this be farre from our purpose, yet we cannot avoyd the imputation of it. That which is not (as some distinguish) the aime, scope, and intendment of the speaker or actor may yet be the aime and scope of his action, worke or speech ; no doubt *Jsb* was very farre from the least thought of diminishing much more of denying the greatnesse of God, either in his power, wisdom, or goodnesse, yea (as was granted before) he spake very highly of him in all these his glorious and divine perfections ;

Finis operis licet non operanti.

fections. It was not his end when he spake so impatiently and complainingly, to rob God of that honour of his greatnesse, yet *Elihu* did him no wrong when he sayd his impatience and complaining did it. And if any shall be found complaining like *Job*, though they doe not formally deny, that God is greater then man, yet that interpretation and construction may justly be put upon their complaints.

But some may here object and say, how was *Job* such a mirror, such a patterne of patience, as the Apostle *James* makes him (*Chap: 5. 11.*) if he manifested so much impatience as might be interpreted by others, though not intended by him a deniall of the Greatnesse of God?

I answer, though all agree (and the testimony of the Spirit of God is enough to confirme it, though all should not agree) that the patience of *Job* was exceeding great, yet no man may say (nor doth the Spirit of God, in Scripture, say it) that his patience was perfect; his patience was such as exceeded the most, yea (for ought that we know) the best of men, yet his was but the patience of a man, of a man compassed about with the like passions as other men. His patience was sincere and without hypocrisie, but his patience was not compleate nor without infirmity; or his patience (we may say) was perfect as to the kind, but it was not perfect as to the degree. His patience deserved both commendation and imitation; yet he shewed (at times) such impatience as deserved reproofe, and should not be imitated but mortified and avoyded. Good men doe not only act lesse in goodnesse sometimes, but ill and much amisse. And while we see tallest Cedars fayle (they shall not utterly fall, *Job* did not) *Let him that thinketh he standeth* (that is, who hath a strong opinion of his owne strength) *take heed lest he fall*, (as the Apostle cautions him, *1 Cor: 10. 12.*) for even the impatient complaints of *Job* in his sufferings (like those sufferings of the *Israelites* for their sins spoken of in the former verses of that Chapter) fell from him for an ensample (or type) and are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Thus you see the reason why *Elihu* tooke up this common principle, which every Child learns out of a Catechisme, to convince this holy man with. What was more knowne to *Job*, or to any knowing man, then this, that God is greater then man? yet

Elihu:

Quæ pueri ipsi decantata sunt nobis in gravi luctu & perurbatione

Elihu chose this as the most commodious and effectually argument, to compose his spirit, and quiet him after all his distempered and tumultuating complaints; nor hath *Elihu* yet done arguing downe the hight and unquietnesse of *Job's* spirit. We have him both reproving him for it by way of question, and giving him another unanswerable argument against it, in the next verse.

Vers. 13. *Why dost thou strive against him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters?*

The words are a reproving question; As if he had sayd, Thou dost ill, very ill to strive. There is a four-fold striving, three of which are held forth in Scripture under the word of the text.

First, There is a striving with outward force and power, either personally man with man (properly called *contention*) or more generally, nation with nation, properly called *warre*.

Secondly, There is a legall striving, a striving by way of plea, about matters of right and title. The word in the text chiefly imports such a judiciary striving, a strife in law, when the adverse party or *Plaintiffe* impleads and commenseth his suit against the *Defendant*. Striving is taken in this sence and joyned with warring in the description of that contest which *Jephthah* had with the King of the Children of *Ammon* (Judg: 11. 25.) And now art thou any thing better then *Balak* the son of *Zippor* king of *Moab*? did he ever strive against *Israel*? or did he ever fight against them? That is, did he either make warre with *Israel*, or did he so much as challenge and plead his right to their land by law? That other name which *Joash Gideons* father occasionally gave him (Judg: 6. 31; 32.) takes part from this word; Therefore on that day he called him *Jerubbaal*, saying, Let *Baal* plead against him, because he hath throwne downe his altar. As if he had sayd, Let *Baal* come and enter his action against my Son if he please; and let my Son alone to answer him.

Thirdly, There is a logical striving, or a striving by dint of argument and reason. Thus disputants strive; and Books of controversy about matters of faith and worship are called Bookes of *Polemical Divinity*. Nor indeed hath any kind of strife been carried on with higher and hotter animosities then those managed by tongue and pen in writing and disputing.

ut nova quædam proponenda sunt. Mert.

217 contendere perinet ad judicalem & forensem litem ad dei tribunal instituendam: quod sæpe populus Job.

Fourthly, The word is applyed to any angry passionate chiding and complaining. Thus 'tis used in that famous history (*Exod: 17.*) where the people of *Israel* (having journeyed from *Sin* and pitched in *Rephidim*, v. 1.) *did chide with Moses*: from which act (v: 7th) *He called the place Massa and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us or not?* Because the people of *Israel* strove with *Moses*, or rather with God himselfe, Therefore to keepe them under the sence of this sin and provocation, *Moses* called the name of the place *Meribah*, which signifieth *Striving*. In this last sence, as striving is used by way of chiding and complaining we are to understand it here. *Why dost thou strive against him?* (saith *Elihu*) That is, why dost thou chide and complaine about the dealings of God with thee? or because he will not render thee a reason of his dealings with thee in this affliction. *Job* made many striving and chiding complaints, his first were eminently such (*Chap: 3. 11.*) *Why dyed I not from the womb? why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly? why did the knees prevent me, or why the breasts, that I should sucke?* He chideth hard about the hardnesse of his condition in this life, who chideth becaute he liveth. Read him in the same language (*Chap: 10. 18.*) and in a language not much unlike it in severall other places. Yea *Job* doth (I say not formally yet virtually) call out or challenge God more then once to plead with him, and make good his cause against him. *Why dost thou strive with him?*

For he giveth no account of any of his matters.

וַיֹּאמֶר

The word signifieth properly *to answer*, and so the text might well enough be rendred here out of the originall, *he answereth not*. Mr *Broughton* saith, *He will not speake for all his dealings*. If any man demand of God a reason of his doings, he may chuse whether he will give it him or no: He will not be brought to a reckoning: *He will not, he needeth not to answer*, or give an account

Of any of his matters, or, of any of his words.

כל ובר ז

'Tis frequent in the Hebrew to expresse matters or things, by this word, which in strictness signifieth but *a word*. (*Chap: 19. 28.*) *Seeing the root of the matter* (the text is the root of the word)

word) is found in me. So here, *He giveth not account of any of his words or matters.* Again, The originall ſaith, *He giveth not account of all his matters.* We translate full and right to the ſence, when we ſay, *He giveth not account of any of his matters.* For the meaning of *Elihu* is not that God giveth an account of ſome (though that be a truth) but not indeed of all his matters, he hath ſome reſerved caſes and counſels, but his meaning is, that he is not oblig'd to give any man an account of ſo much as of any of his matters. And then, that univerſall is to be taken diſtributively, *All for any.* So we render it (*Pſal. 147. 20.*) where the *Pſalmiſt* ſhewing the ſpeciall priviledges of Gods people, ſaith, *He hath not dealt ſo with all nations*; We translate more emphatically, *He hath not dealt ſo with any nation.* God was ſo far from giving the ſame priviledge to all nations, which he gave to his *Israel*, that he gave not the ſame to any nation. As if he had ſayd, *God hath honoured his peculiar people with peculiar favours, goe enquire and ſearch all the nations of the world, and ye ſhall not picke out a people upon whom God hath beſtowed ſuch rich and precious mercies, as he hath upon his Israel.* And to this day the *Israel* of God in every nation enjoy ſuch ſpirituall priviledges and mercies as the Nations with whom they are civilly mingled know not of. But, to the poynt; Thus here, *He giveth not account of all*; that is, *not of any of his matters.*

Moſt of the Greeke translators render (according to the ſtrictneſſe of the letter) not matters but words: *Why doſt thou ſtrive with him? for his words are ſuch as to which none can answer.* As if the meaning of *Elihu* were; when God ſpeakes, no man is able to reply upon him, or contradicte him. *His ſayings are indeed irrefragable.* Thus they gloſſe their translation; *Why doſt thou call him into Judgement, or ſtrive with him? for all his ſpeeches are ſuch as cannot be contradicted.* If God oppoſe, who can answer, and if God answer, who can oppoſe him? That's a good ſence, though not a good translation.

Some others interpret the latter part of the verſe as containing *Job's* answer to the queſtion put by *Elihu* in the firſt part of it; *Why doſt thou ſtrive with God?* (ſaith *Elihu*) To which *Job* is ſuppoſed, replying, *Be cauſe he gives me not an account of my matters*; God doth not answer to my words, and therefore pardon me if I complaine or ſtrive with him: I hope while I am thus unanſwered,

לכל נא

Quid igitur ipſam vocas in judicium? omnes enim ſermones ejus ſunt ejuſmodi, quibus contradicere non poſſit.

Theod: Græci in prima perſona רבוי verbis meis, non in tertia ut nos legimus רבוי verbis ſuis; quaſi Elihu timicā; verba Jobi reſerat, cur cum eo auſus es contendere dicens,

you

quia omnibus
verbis meis
non respon-
det, &c.
Bold:

you will hold me excused if I move againe and againe, yea, even strive for an answer. But the Grammar of the text is against this reading, the words being plainly in the third person, *his matters*, not in the first, *my matters*; and 'tis too great a boldnesse with the text, to make such a change in the translation. Besides 'tis more agreeable to the scope of the place, to take the latter part of the verse as a reason given by *Elihu*, why *Job* should not strive with God, then to take it as a reason given by *Job* why he did.

Quare adver-
sus eum litigas
quod de omni-
bus rebus suis
non respondeat.
Jun:

I find a learned translator among the Modernes, who taking the latter part of the verse as a reason given by *Job* of his striving with God spoken of in the first, yet keepes to the third person; *Why dost thou strive with him? Because he will not give an answer (or an account) of all his matters.* As if *Elihu* had sayd, *I plainly perceive the cause why thou (O Job) art so unquiet, and still persistest striving with God, 'Tis even because he doth not answer thy so often repeated desire, to summon thy appearance before him, and then to give thee an account of his proceedings with thee. But consider, man? art thou well in thy wits? knowest thou what thou dost, or sayest? wilt thou a poore narrow-hearted creature take it ill at the hands of the great God, and as it were strive with him, because he doth not render a reason of all his matters, and expound all his doings unto thee?* The argument may be formed thus.

He is not just or right who striveth with God, because God doth not give him a reason of all his actions and administrations.

But thou seemest to strive with God, because he hath not given thee an account or reason of his administrations towards thee; therefore thou art not just.

This is a faire and proper sence; yet I shall keepe to our reading, and make this latter part of the verse, as a ground or reason given by *Elihu* why *Job* ought not to strive with God, as those two other readings make it a reason why he did; As if *Elihu* had sayd, *Why dost thou strive against him?* Consider as God is greater then man, so he is absolute in his greatnesse, or his is a soveraigne Greatnesse.

For he giveth not account of any of his matters.

This I conceive the best and clearest rendring of these words, which thus understood yeilds us severall usefull observations: First, upon the whole matter, thus:

Graciously

Gracious men doe not alwayes hold out the same gracious frame of spirit.

There was a time when *Job* was far from striving with God, far from doing or speaking any thing which had the least shadow or savour of it. Time was, when *Job* was altogether for, and in submitting to God; Let God doe what he will with him, he had not a word to say against him. After all the sad reports and messages which were brought to him of the devastation of his whole estate in the field, yea of the disastrous death of all his children in one day, and at once; did *Job* strive with God? did he utter one word of complaint, or so much as of any dissatisfaction? No, not one, but gave Glory by this confession; *The Lord hath given, and the Lord hath taken, blessed be the name of the Lord.* Was not here a cleare yeilding of himselfe up to God, to doe what he would with him? Did he not freely lay himselfe low, when God had layed him at the lowest? who ever heard or read of a more perfect worke of patience in a meere mortall man? Yet in the process of the business, *Job* did not only speak such words as carried a shadow of striving with God, but were reall strivings and uncomely pleadings with him. His heart did not retaine that first sweet submissive frame throughout the affliction, which appeared to admiration at the beginning of it. The state of grace abideth alwayes, 'tis not (as some affirme) loseable; 'tis not, like the best things of this world perishing. But though a state of Grace abideth alwayes, yet every mans grace (if any mans) doth not alwayes abide in the same state. A true frame of grace shall never be destroyed, but the heart of a gracious man doth not alwayes continue in the same frame. The heate of grace may be cooled, the hight of it abated, the strength of it weakned, and the beauty of it faded. He that a while agoe walked and acted very humbly, may upon another temptation act very proudly, and walke as if he were above all his brethren. He that one while hath acted very self-denyingly, may at another time act very self-seekingly. He that hath acted very lovingly, (the very law of love being stamped upon his words and workes) may at another time act very unlovely and lovelesly, and doe things which are very much beside and below, yea contrary to the fulfilling of that royall Law; He may be so far from bearing his brothers burden;

(which

(which is the fulfilling of that law of Christ, *Gal: 6. 2.*) that he may be a burden to his brother. And while at one time you might have done and spoken almost what you would to him, and he could beare it, at another time, doe what you can, or speake what you can, he is offended. Such changes and varieties are found upon the most gracious frames of spirit, which the best of Saints have in this world: We have only this to hold to, the state of grace is unchangeable, and we are waiting for such a frame of grace as shall never change. That gracious frame in which the hand of God will set us up in the day of our resurrection to glory, shall never change, nor decline a haire's breadth to all eternity. We shall be as pure, and as holy, and as spirituall, and as heavenly, and as meeke, and as full of the praise of God for ever, as ever. As full to eternity as in the very first moment in which that glorious frame shall be set up. But in this life to how great a degree of grace soever we attaine, we seldome retaine the same degree, but are flowing and ebbing like the water, waxing and waining like the Moone. *Job* was found striving with God, who a little before had so humbly submitted and was so fully resigned unto him.

Secondly, Observe.

There is a spirit in man very apt to strive with God.

Doe ye thinke (saith the Apostle, *Jam: 4. 5.*) that the Scripture saith in vaine, *The spirit that dwelleth in us, lusteth to envie,* or (as the margin hath it) *enviously*; surely no; the Scripture doth not speake this in vaine, and if any thinke it doth, their thoughts are vaine. Now, as there are lustings in men to envie against their brethren, because of the gifts and good things of God which they enjoy; so there are lustings in men to discontent against God, because of the evils which themselves suffer. When God seemes to contend with us, we really fall to contending with God. The waters of *Meribah* will be an everlasting winess of this; of which *Moses* sayd (*Numb: 20. 13.*) *This is the water of Meribah, because the children of Israel strove with the Lord, and he was sanctified in them.* The Apostle doth more then intimate this readines of man to strive with God, while by a vehement expostulation he checks it, and reproves all men for it. (*1 Cor: 10. 22.*) *Doe we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger then he?* They presume

sume much upon their strength, who are forward to strive, they especially who proyeoke and challenge others to strive with them. There is a spirit in man which stouts it with God, even to a provocation of strife with him.

But you will say, When may we be sayd to strive with God? I answer, we doe it these foure wayes.

First, Man striveth with God by disobeying his commands; that's a strife with his holiness. The lawes of God beare the image or stampe of his holiness. All disobedience is an unanswerableness to the Law, wilfull disobedience is a making voyd the Law. He that is resolved to sin, witheth there were no Law to stop him from sinning, or to punish him when he hath sinned. What greater strife can be raised against the Law-giver, then to with he had given no such Law?

Secondly, Men strive with God, by not believing or distrusting his promises. That's a strife with his faithfulness, or with his power. Unbeliefe is one of the worst wayes, if not the worst of all the wayes of striving with God. The reason why that place at the rock in *Horeb* was called *Meribah* (Exod: 17. 7.) was because the people did not believe. They thought they must dye with thirst in the wilderness when they saw no water. They fell to this sin againe a second time upon the like occasion, while they abode in *Kadesh* (Numb: 20. 1, 2, 3.) And as the people strove there with God by their rebellious unbeliefe, so also did *Moses* and *Aaron* by their unbeliefe, that God would give water to such rebels, as it follows in the same Chapter (v. 10, 11, 12.) There is no sin so often, or so properly called a provocation as unbeliefe is. Yea by unbeliefe we strive so much with God, that we are sayd to weary him (*Isa: 7. 13.*) O how doe they weary God, who either thinke him so weake that he cannot, or so unfaithfull that he will not make good his word, or performe his promises! The first of these is alwayes in unbeliefe, the latter often.

Thirdly, We strive with God by not bearing his hand, or by our impatience under the cross which his hand layeth upon us: while we quarrell with the rod, we quarrell with God who chasteneth us with it. This was the most speciall way in which *Job* strove with God; and the sinfulness of it, hath been severall times toucht upon in this booke.

Fourthly, any murmuring word about, yea any discontented thought with our owne condition, though not vented by words, though it be kept in, and lye close in the bosome, is a striving with God. And so likewise is any tumultuating thought about his providences towards others, and his stating of affaires in the world.

Now as there is such a sinfull principle in man to strive with God; so considering, as hath been shewed, how many wayes it workes (and many more wayes of its working might be shewed, this, I say, being considered) we may be found striving with God before we thinke of it, yea while we oppose the very thought of it. Therefore (as *Gamaliel* warned the *Jewes*, saying (*Acts* 5. 39.) *Take heed what ye doe, lest haply ye be found even to fight against God*; Those *Jewes* did not thinke their opposing the Messengers and Ministers of Christ, was a fighting against God; But *Gamaliel* told them plainly it was. So in many other cases, we may do & say that which brings us under the same charge of striving with or against God, though we have no purpose (as *Job* had not) to strive with him.

Againe, As this text sheweth us *Job* striving with God, so it sheweth us *Elihu* striving with or questioning *Job* about it. This question or expostulation, *Why dost thou strive with him?* was a chideing severe reproofe of him for doing so.

Hence note.

For man to strive with God is most uncomely.

Doth it suite the condition, or become the state of man to doe so? it doth not become man as a creature to strive with God, much lesse as a new-creature, as a professed servant of God, as a Saint, as a Christian. We never act so unlike either creatures, or new creatures, Saints, and Christians, as when we strive with God. 'Tis a shame for a childe to strive with his father, or for a servane to strive with his Master, how much more for a creature to strive with his Creator, man with God?

Fourthly, The rebuke which *Elihu* gave *Job*, did not only import the uncomeliness of his striving with God, but the sinfulness of it.

Hence note.

To strive with God (in any of those wayes before described) is a sin exceeding sinfull.

How.

How extreemly sinfull it is for man to strive with God, appears by all the relative duties of man to God: Every servant and son of God, is bound, first, to submit to God; is it not exceeding sinfull to strive where we ought to submit? Secondly, Every godly man by these relations to God, is bound to be content with (which is more then barely to submit to) all his dealings; Doe not they sin, who in stead of being content, strive with God because he deales so with them? Thirdly, Man ought, not only to be content, but to be well-pleased with what God doth; How farre are they departed from a well-pleasednesse with God, who strive against him, which is an act of high displeasure? It is sayd of *David* (2 Sam: 3. 36.) *Whatsoever the King did pleased all the people.* The people did not say to *David* their King, doe what you will, we will be pleased with it; But *David* was so gracious a Prince, so good a King, that he did nothing that was justly displeasing to the people. 'Tis more then comes to the share of a man, though a King to say, Let him doe what he will, we will be pleased with it, but 'tis certainly our duty to say to God, Doe what you will, doe your pleasure with us, and to us, we will (through grace) be pleased with it. Is it not very sinfull to strive with him about any thing he doth, in and with all whose doing we ought to acquiesce, and be well pleased?

Fifthly, These words, *Why dost thou strive with him?* import a high presumption in those who doe so.

Hence observe.

Striving with God is a presumptuous sin.

The Prophet saith, (*Isa: 45. 9.*) *Woe unto him that striveth with his maker. Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth: Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, what makest thou? or thy work he hath no hands?* When the Prophet saith, *Let the potsherd strive with the potsherd of the earth;* his meaning is, let man strive with man, but let not any man presume to strive with his maker; for then the potsherd striveth with the potter. In all which he doth not encourage man to strive with man, (though his match) but sheweth how insufferable a boldness it is for any man (how ineschless soever among men) to strive with God. The King of *Judah* having sent a challenge to the King of *Israel*, He returned this answer (2 Kings 14. 9.) *The thistle*

that was in Lebanon sent to the Cedar that was in Lebanon, &c. As if he had sayd, What a presumption is it for a thistle to equall it selfe with a Cedar? and therefore he adviseth. (v. 10.) *Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thy heart hath lifted thee up: glory of this and tarry at home; for why shouldst thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldst fall, thou and Judah with thee?* As if he had sayd, thou canst get nothing by meddling with me but blowes, and most probably, thine owne ruine to boote. Now if an earthly King shall look upon it as a presumption for another King his equall in dignity to contend with him, how much more may the God of heaven, who is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, count it an high presumption for any man, though the greatest King on earth, to strive with him?

Sixthly, We use to say to those who act foolishly, Why doe you thus? And therefore when *Elihu* saith to *Job*, *Why dost thou strive against him?*

We learne.

Striving with God is a foolish and a most irrationall thing.

Sinners are fooles, all sin is folly, irrationallity is stampt upon every sin. Striving with God is a sin so eminently foolish as may carry away the bell, for foolishnesse, from all other sins. I will give you three things, to shew why it must needs be so.

First, We cannot helpe our selves by striving with God. *Christ* argues the folly of inordinate cares from this ground (*Math. 6. 27.*) *Which of you by taking thought can adde one cubit unto his stature?* It is not mans care, but the presence and blessing of God which encrease both the stature of man and his estate. Cares may breake our sleepe; yea breake our hearts, but they cannot fill our purses; nor heighten our persons, either in a naturall or in a civill notion. Is it not then a foolish thing to take inordinate care? is it not greater folly to strive with God? Seeing as by caring you cannot get any of the good things of the world, so by striving with God, you cannot get off any of those evils which he layeth upon you. Secondly, Is it not a very foolish thing to strive with God, seeing we are so farre from helping our selves out of trouble by it, that we doe but increase our trouble, and the more entangle our selves by it? What doe we by struggling but straiten the bonds of our affliction, and get wearinesse,

ness, in stead of expected ease? till we are quiet with God, how can we hope that he should send us quietness? Thirdly, It is a foolish thing to strive with God, because by striving with him in reference to any misery that is upon us, we hinder our selves from taking comfort in any remaining mercy. Though God takes away many mercies; yet while life remaineth there is somewhat of mercy remaining. When *Job* was stripped to his skin, yet he had somewhat left, which was a ground of his blessing God. The greatest losers have somewhat left, they escape at least (as *Job* sayd he did at worst, Chap. 19. 20.) *with the skin of their teeth*. But while we strive with God about the mercies we have lost, we loose the comfort of all the mercies we still enjoy. And is it not extreame folly to deprive our selves of what we have by complaining about what we have not? *Why dost thou strive?* Thus much from the emphasis of the former part of the verse, as 'tis put into a chideing or reproving question, *Why dost thou strive against him?* From the latter branch.

He giveth not account of any of his matters.

Observe.

First, *The power and dominion of God is absolute.*

God is not subject to any reckonings with man whatsoever he doth. He that may doe what he will, and can doe nothing but what is right, neither may nor can be brought to any account for what he hath done. He that is unaccountable is absolute in power.

Further, God needs not give man any account, upon these three grounds. First, He oweth no man any thing; He hath received nothing of us, and if a man hath not received, he needeth not account. They that have any trust from men, are to give account. But what hath God received from man? Man receives his all from God. Why then should God give any account?

Secondly, Consider, the Lord hath wronged no man, nor can he. He is infinitely just and righteous in all his wayes; He not only doth just things, but things are just, because he doth them. Why should he give an account of any of his matters, who neither doth nor can doe any matter which is unjust? If we knew and were fully assured of a man (in whose hands we have trusted much.)

much) that he were ſo juſt, that he would not (though he had opportunity) deceive us of a farthing, we would never call him to an account. As it is ſayd of thoſe treaſurers in the ſtory of the Kings (2 Kings 12. 15.) *They reckoned not with the men into whoſe hand they delivered the money to be beſtowed on workmen, for they dealt faithfully.* An example hardly to be parallel'd in an age by the ſons of men. Many are more deſirous of truſts, then carefull to diſcharge them; They love to have much treaſure paſſe through their hands, that ſome of it may, in paſſage, ſlip into their owne pockets and purſes. Juſtice and faithfullneſs are rare Jewels among men, and therefore it is but need they ſhould have a check upon them, and be called to an account. But the holy God is altogether juſt and faithfull, therefore to what purpoſe ſhould he be called to an account. Let us reſt quiet in this acknowledgement, That he whoſe will is the higheſt reaſon, can doe nothing without reaſon. Man was created under God, and then he returnes to the order of his creation, when he prefers the judgement of God, even when he doth not underſtand it, before his owne.

Thirdly, There is no man, no nor Angel, that hath any authority to call God to an account. They that are accountable to others, are under their power, either as being in degree above them, or as having made a compact & covenant with them (though their equalls) to give them an account. But who ſhall call God to an account, who is higher then the higheſt? And though God hath condeſcended to make a covenant with man, and therein given him aſſurance that he will doe him good, yet God hath engaged himſelfe to give us an account how or in what way he makes good or performes his Covenant. Man muſt give an account to God how he hath performed the Articles of the Covenant, not God to man. As man is a fraile dying creature, ſo he is an accountable creature (Luke 16. 2.) *Give an account of thy Stewardſhip, for thou mayſt be no longer Steward* (Rom: 14. 12.) *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelfe to God.* God will call every man to a ſtrict account of his receipts and expences, what talents of time and opportunities of parts and abilities, of power and Authorities, have been put into his hand, as alſo how he hath huſbanded and improved them. We, alas poore creatures, by ſtriving with God, call him (upon the matter) to give us an account of his matters; And in the meane time forget the

*Homo ſub deo
eſt conditus &
ad conditionis
ordinem reddit,
quando ſibi e-
quitatem judi-
cii, etiam quam
non intelligit
anteponit.*

Greg 1. 13.

Mor: c. 18.

the account which we must give to him of all our matters. It is our duty and will be our wisdom to account so with our selves every day, that we may be ready for our account in that Great and last Audit-Day; And as to remember & prepare for our own account in that day, will keepe us from doing or saying any thing which may be interpreted a calling of God to an account all our dayes : so that remembrance will make us strive how to improve and be bettered by the afflictions and troubles wherewith we are exercised in the world, in stead of striving with God, because he puts us upon those severer exercises ; for how we have improved our afflictions will be one part (and that a very considerable one) of our account to God in that day.

Lastly, The two parts of this verse connected and considered together, (*Why dost thou strive against him, for he giveth not account of any of his matters*) The latter being a reason of the former, give us this Observation.

God being absolute in power we ought to sit down quietly under all his dealings : Or thus, The consideration of Gods absolute Sovereignty, that he gives not account of any of his matters, should stop all our strivings and pleadings with or against God.

Our strivings against God are of two sorts, or in a double respect ; They respect either our eternall, or our temporall estate.

First, With respect to our eternall state (for about that we are apt to call God to account.) O what strivings are there in the hearts of men about Gods absolute sovereignty in electing of some and rejecting of others. The Apostle is much upon it (*Rom. 9.*) where having represented the Lord speaking thus by *Moses* (*vers. 15.*) *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion :* He presently prevents an Objection, or the strife of man with God about that saying, (*vers. 19.*) *Thou wilt say then, why doth he yet find fault ?* (As if men might find fault with God, if he in that case should find fault with them ?) *for who hath resisted his will ?* This is mans plea against the soveraigne will of God. But what saith the Lord by the Apostle to such a pleader ? we have his reproof of him for an answer in the next verse ; *Nay but O man, who art thou that repliest against God ? shall the thing formed say to him that formed*

formed it, why hast thou made me thus? hath not the Potter power over the clay? The Apostle brings in this Argument as to mans eternall state; he must not strive with God about that. He must not say, why doth God find fault with man? *O man, who art thou that dost logick it thus with God?* His absolute power is his reason why he dispolet h thus or thus of thee, or any man else. He will give thee no account why it is so, but his own will to have it so. For shame sit downe, stop thy mouth for ever, speak not thus to God. If thou art, as thou canst not deny, a thing formed by God, then say not why hast thou made me thus? And as now thou strivest with God about that which thou canst not understand, so at last (though now thou dost not) thou shalt understand that thou oughtest not to have striven with him about it. And indeed if men have a mind to strive with God, they may find as many occasions for it in the doctrine of his conditionall decrees of foreseene faith, repentance, and persevering obedience, as in his absolute. We shall never want matter of quarrelling with God, till we have learned simply, that is, graciously to submit.

Secondly, This truth should much more quiet our spirits, and stop our strivings in reference to our temporall estate. And that,

First, As wrapt up in common with others. Did we consider the soveraigne power of God in ordering the affairs of Nations and Churches, we would glorifie him in a gracious silence however we see things goe with them. The Scripture urgeth us often to this fixednesse of mind in the midst of all publick revolutions and changes upon this only account. Heare *David (Psal. 46. 9, 10.) Come behold the works of the Lord, (What works? ruining works) what desolation he hath made in the earth.* God made strange work in the World at that time, Those countreyes which before were as the Garden of God, became like a desolate Wildernesse; who was able to beare this with patience? Yet the Spirit of God saith in the next words, it must be patiently borne; when God lets men strive and warre with one another to a common confusion, yet no man may strive with God about it; and the reason given why no man may, is only this (which is indeed all the reason in the world) *He is God.* So it follows in the Psalm, *Be still and know that I am God;* As if the Lord had said, not a word, do not strive nor reply, whatever you see, hold your peace; know that I being God I give no account of any of my matters. Thus the Prophet cautions

cautions the whole world (*Zech. 2. 13.*) *Be silent O all flesh before the Lord,* (doe not dispute the doings of God, doe not murmur at them) *for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.* That is, God is going to work (as a man raised out of his bed is) therefore doe not you trouble your selves, nor rise up against him in your words or thoughts what work soever he makes. Like counsell is given (*Psal. 75. 5.*) *Lift not up your horne on high, speak not with a stiffe neck; for promotion cometh neither from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South: But God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* All great changes proceed from his judgment; take heed of judging the sentence of the great Judge. Remember, *That he whose name alone is Jehovah, is the most high over all the earth.* (*Psal. 83. 18.*)

Again, This is as true if we respect the private or personall estate of any man. If God makes a man poor in estate or despised in the World; if he make him sick or weak in body, he must not say unquietly, why doth God thus? If he taketh away our Relations, if he empty our families we must not strive with him. When old Ely had received one of the saddest messages that ever was sent man. *It is the Lord* (said he) *let him doe what seemeth him good* (*1 Sam. 3. 18.*) So David (*Psal. 39. 9.*) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it* (*Psal. 62. 1.*) *Truly my soul waiteth patiently upon God.* The word is, *my soul is silent before God.* And (*Psal. 42. 5.*) How doth David chide his soul for making a noyse? *Why art thou disquieted O my soul, hope thou in God.*

But you will say, May we not at all strive? what ever God doth in the World, or with us, must we sit downe under it, or rest satisfied in it, and say nothing?

I answer, First, we may and ought to be very sensible of all the dealings of God. But we must not be unquiet under any of them. It is one thing to feele the smart, and another thing to dispute the rod. Some are under a kind of Stoicall stupidity; they doe not strive with God, because they doe not mind what God doth, they are not sensible. Others are stout, sturdy, and proud spirited, they care not for the crosse, they slight and despise rebukes. Thus or upon these grounds not to strive with God is as bad, if not worse then that striving with him which this poynt dissuades and disproves. We may, yea we ought to take notice of every stroak we receive from God.

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Secondly,

Secondly, As we should be sensible of the hand of God at any time upon us, so we may pray for the removing of his hand; 'Tis not a sinfull but a gracious act, to strive with God by prayer for deliverance out of trouble.

Thirdly, A man under the Rod may use means to get it off, and free himselfe from it, even while he is quiet under it. So then, the quietnesse of mind in our afflicted condition here intended and pressed, is opposed only, first, to fretting and repining. Secondly, to vexing and tumultuating. Thirdly, to distracting cares. Fourthly, to desponding fears. Fifthly, to killing sorrows. Sixthly, to uncomposednesse of spirit for our callings. Seventhly, to hard thoughts of God. Eighthly, to the using of any unlawfull meanes to help or rescue our selves out of the hand of evill.

And that we may be preserved from all these strivings against God, and unquietnesse of spirit under any of his saddest and darkest dispensations, which will certainly run us upon some of, if not all those eight most dangerous rocks, last mentioned, Let me lay down a few considerations, why we should not strive with God in such a manner: And prescribe some preservatives to keep us at the greatest distance from it.

First, Consider, to strive with God dishonours God and darkens his glory; for hereby we call his wisdom and goodnesse, yea his truth and faithfulness to us in question. What can be done more dishonourable to God, then this? God resented it as a great dishonour, that *Moses* and *Aaron* did not sanctifie him (that is, give glory to his name) *before the children of Israel* (Num: 20. 12.) and therefore told them, *Ye shall not bring the children of Israel into the land which I have given them.* As if he had sayd, Ye have not honoured me as ye ought in this thing, and therefore I will not honour you in that. But what is it, that *Moses* and *Aaron* did not sanctifie God in? it was, (saith the text) *in not believing.* And what is that (at best) but a striving with God, as to the truth of his word and his faithfulness in fulfilling it?

Secondly, Such striving with God hinders the exercise of grace, and stops the worke of the new creature. He that striveth with God by way of murmuring, can never strive with God by praying and believing.

Thirdly, Such strivings with God are the exercising of our lusts and corruptions. Then is the time for anger and discontent,

or any evill affection to come forth and act their part.

Fourthly, Striving with God is an argument that sin hath much strength in us, and that corruption hath got a mighty hand over us.

Fifthly, Striving with God layeth us open to all the temptations of Satan, to all the fiery darts of the Devill. Our shield is gone, when once we strive with God, who is our shield in all Satrans strivings and assaults against us; And then we stand naked before that armed enemy.

Sixthly, Striving with God, doth at once unfit us for every good duty, and putteth us further off from every desired mercy.

Seventhly, and lastly, Striving against God, makes man most like the Devill, who is the most unquiet and discontented creature in the world, and is alwayes both striving with God, and vexing at his owne condition. The devill's sin at first was striving with God, and 'tis the summe of all his actings and workings against man ever since. None resemble the devill more lively then male-contentes; and who are they but such as strive and struggle against the afflictive providences of God.

Now for the preserving and keeping of our hearts from this great, this complicated sin, a sin containing many sins in it; and disposing us to all sin. Lay these things to heart.

First, let us consider our own nothingness in comparison of God. God is all, and what are we? we are nothing, and shall we strive with God? shall folly strive against wisdom, and weaknesse against strength? When the Prophet would comfort the people of God against the strivings of the nations with them, he doth it upon this consideration (*Isa: 40: 17.*) *All nations before him are as nothing; and they are counted to him lesse then nothing, and vanity; To whom will ye compare him?* And surely we may by the same argument, much more deterre all men from striving with God. Shall single persons strive against him, to whom not only they, but whole nations are nothing, yea and lesse then nothing?

Secondly, Doe we find our selves under a crosse; or in a hard condition? remember we have deserved no better. As we are nothing; so we have deserved nothing. *Jacob* to keepe his spirit quiet in a time of great distresse confessed (*Gen: 32: 10.*) *Lord I am unworthy of the least of thy mercies.* As if he had sayd, I have no reason to complaine, or be angry, to fret or vex at this dis-

penſation, yea though thou ſhouldeſt let the cloud of my brothers wrath breake upon me, and ſwallow me up, for what am I? If we conſider we have deſerved no good, we ſhall never ſtrive with God about any evill that befalls us; eſpecially, if we conſider

Thirdly, That we are ill-deſerving, or ſuch as deſerve the greateſt evils. None of us ſuffer but what our owne ſin hath procured, yea ſin might have procured us ſoarer ſufferings. Every ſin hath a croſſe in the belly of it. And ſhall we ſtrive with God becauſe of our croſſes, when our ſins have made them?

Fourthly, Why ſhould we ſtrive with God about theſe things? are they worth the ſtriving with God about? ſurely they are not worth the ſtriving with men about, much leſſe with God. If we were in the beſt outward eſtate that ever any man enjoyed in this world, yet we were not then got a ſtep beyond vanity (*Pſal. 39. 5.*) *Every man in his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity.* Suppose God ſhould give you a blank, and bid you ſit downe and write what you would have as to your outward ſtate, and then beſtow it upon you, yet in this beſt eſtate, you and your all are altogether vanity. And will ye ſtrive with God for taking a vaine thing from you? Will you be ſo much diſſatisfied for the taking away or want of that which could not ſatiſſie you when you had it, nor can when you have it againe? If a man had all theſe comforts which he ſtrives for, they could not make him happy, why then ſhould he ſtrive becauſe they are removed from him? But as they are vanity, becauſe unable to ſatiſſie when we have them, ſo they are vanity, becauſe of our uncertainty to hold them. Yea ſuppoſe we hold them as long as we can have them, it is but a while. And ſhall we ſtrive with God about looſing that which at longeſt we cannot keepe long? To be ſure theſe things are not neceſſary for us: Chriſt ſayd to *Martha*, *There is one thing neceſſary* (*Luke 10. 42.*) But a worldly comfort of any kind is not the neceſſary thing which Chriſt there intends; And ſhall we ſtrive with God about unnecesſaries?

Fifthly, Know; afflictions are the portion of the people of God in this life. They are the corrections of a father, and there is no ſon but hath his correction, or may have it. And ſhall we ſtrive with God for ſending us our portion, our ſon-like, child-like portion?

Sixthly, I would ſay this to believers; Why will ye ſtrive with

with God about any of your afflictions? they are for your good and benefit. And will ye strive with God, because he is doing you good? let your afflictions be never so sad, never so sore, and to sence never so bad, yet God is doing you good by them; be not angry with your owne good?

Lastly, Why doe we strive with God under our afflictions; He loveth us as much under affliction, as in a prosperous condition. God is tender to his in their troubles, and shall they be harsh to him, when he is so tender towards them? A parent that hath but nature, will tender his child most when sick and weak, and will not God? Let us take heed we be not found striving with, or having hard thoughts of God while the bowels of his most tender compassions are moving towards us.

To shut up this whole poynt. As Christ when he saw his Disciples in danger to be carried away with the feare of man, saith to them (Luke 12. 4, 5.) *Be not afraid of them that can kill the body, and after that have no more that they can doe; But I will forwarne you, whom you shall feare; feare him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell, yea I say unto you, feare him.* Now, as because men are apt to feare, yea mostly to feare that which they should not, Christ sheweth them whom to feare. So (as hath been shewed) because men are very apt to strive, but they commonly strive with those, and about those things, which they should not. Therefore I will tell you with whom and with what ye should strive. If ye will needs be striving, pray

First, Strive with the sin in your owne bosomes, strive with your owne lusts and corruptions. One of the great Gospel duties which we are called to, is to mortifie our earthly members. To strive with all inordinate affections, with pride, with envie, with love of the world, and with uncharitableness to the death, is our duty, if ye will needs strive, strive with these.

Secondly, If you will needs be striving, then strive with the sins of others in a gracious and zealous manner, as *Nehemiah* did, who contended with the Nobles for their prophanation of the Sabbath, and their unlawfull marriages (Neh: 13. 17. & 25.) we should strive with one another to hinder that which is evill. *Gideon* broke downe *Baals* altar, he strove with *Baal*, and was therefore surnamed *Ferubbah* (Judg: 6. 32.) So let us strive with the corrupt practices, courses, and customes of the times, we live

in, not dilly and comply with them as many doe. The Apostle saith (*Heb: 12. 4.*) *Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin.* That is, either the sin of others, or the sin which others would force you to. Though we should strive against our owne sins especially, yer 'tis good to strive against sin in whomsoever we see it.

Thirdly, If you will be striving, then strive with Satan, The Adversary; *Submit to God, and resist the Devill*, containe the whole duty of man, (*James 4. 7.*) Our businesse is not to strive with God, but to submit to him; And our businesse is not to submit to the Devill, but to strive with him. How doe most run a contrary course? They resist God, and submit to the Devill. O sad! Here's a threefold blessed strife; First, Strive with the lusts and corruptions of your owne hearts; Secondly, Strive with the sins of others, and their solicitations of you to sin: Thirdly, Strive with the Devill and his temptations. Doe not strive with God, why should we strive with God at any time, or in any thing, whom at all times, and in all things, we ought to serve, honour and obey? So much of this chideing question; in which *Elihu* reproves *Job*, and he had given but too much occasion for it. *Why dost thou strive with him, he giveth not account of any of his matters.*

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 14.

For God speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.

IN this verse and the context following, *Elihu* begins his second answer to *Job*, which is also continued to the end of the Chapter. His answer is layd downe.

First, In generall at the 14th verse.

Secondly, In particulars by way of instance, from the 15 verse to the 29th.

Thirdly, He summes up or recapitulates the whole of his discourse, in the 29th and 30th verses.

Fourthly, Concludes, seriously inviting *Job* to answer what he had sayd, as also, what he had yet to say, *vers. 31, 32, 33.*

This 14th verse hath some difficulty in it; And though the crosse and various thoughts of Interpreters about it have made it more difficult, yet there is one thing wherein all Center and agree; That, *Elihu* in this 14th verse and so forward propounds certaine wayes by which God is pleased to reveale and manifest himselfe unto man. First, to humble and bring man to a true sence of himselfe; Secondly, to worke in him an acknowledgement of his great goodnesse and righteousnesse in all his dealings with the children of men. For having sayd at the 13th verse, *God gives not account of any of his matters*; He is above all reckonings and dayes of Audit (having thus, I say, asserted the absolute soveraignty of God over man) he adds, to mitigate and allay the seeming severity of this assertion, That although God be so high and great, that he is not at all obliged to give any account of himselfe or of his wayes to the creature, nor will allow any man to be so bold as to strive with him about, or question any of his matters, yet he is pleased freely and graciously to condescend unto man many wayes; and not only once but often; not only often in one way, but by severall wayes to give him cleare intimations what his will is, what he requires of him, and calls unto him for, if man had but will and understanding to perceive it; *for he speaketh once, yea, twice, yet man perceiveth it not.* So then, man hath no reason to complaine (as *Job* sometimes had done, and many

Deus nemini rationem reddere tenetur. Tanto tamen amore nos complectitur ut sepius judiciorum suorum rationes aperire dignetur, etsi id non semper observamus. Lavati:

others.

others in like distresses doe) that he is in the darke, and doth not perceive the minde of God towards him, why he is so afflicted, and why God contendeth with him; for God doth give rouches, hints, and admonitions, sometimes more privately, sometimes more openly, and if man doth not perceive them, it is his owne fault.

Vers. 14. *For he speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not.*

We render the first word of this verse by that causall particle, *For*; yet because the text doth not strictly carry a reason in it of what was sayd before, but is rather an explication or an accommodation of it; therefore some begin the verse, not with that causall particle *For*, but with an adverb of time, *When*. So Mr Broughton, *When the omnipotent speaketh once, &c.* And the reason of it is, because we find another adverb of time answering this at the 16th verse, *When God speaketh once or twice, and man perceiveth it not, &c.* then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction. As if Elihu had sayd; *If speaking will not doe it, somewhat else shall; or when God having spoken once or twice; yet findes man unattentive and unsensible, he takes another course; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth up their instruction. If they understand not his meaning by dreams and visions, he will awaken them to purpose.* We say,

For God speaketh.

As if here a reason were given why God should not be called at all (as being so great he ought not) to give man an account of any of his matters, *for he speaketh once or twice*, he is aforehand with man.

For God speaketh.

To speake, in strict sence, as speaking is the forming up of words by an articulate voyce, is proper to man; yet in Scripture God is sayd to speake, when or howsoever he maketh knowne his mind to man. Which he alwayes doth in such a way, as is most suitable to his owne greatnesse, with respect to mans weaknesse. When God giveth us any intimation of his owne will, and of our duty, of what he will doe for us, or of what he would have us doe, then

then he is sayd to speake to us. (*Heb: 1. 1.*) God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last dayes spoken to us by his Son. God spake to the old fathers, as at many times, or by many parts, so in divers wayes and manners; he delivered his mind unto the people usually by the Prophets, and to the Prophets in dreames and visions. The speaking of God was either immediate from himselfe in those dreames and visions to the Prophets, or mediate by the Prophets. And though now God doth not speake to us immediately as he did to the Prophets before Christ came in the flesh, and to the Apostles after he was come in the flesh, yet All the Propheticall and Apostolicall writings are the speakings of God to us, besides what he dayly speaketh to us (answerable to what is written) both inwardly by the workings of his Spirit, and outwardly by the workes of his providence. *For he speaketh once, &c.*

*Dei admonitio
voca et forma-
nis saepe loco
est, et si non sem-
per ipse et lo-
quatur ut saepe
veteribus pa-
tribus loqui so-
lebat quocumq;
tandem modo
admoneat.*
Merc:

Hence note.

In what way soever God reveales his minde unto man, he speakes unto him.

Every manifestation of the will of God to us is a Sermon; what man speaketh to us according to the word of God, is to be received as the word of God. For as God speaketh to us, though not formally, yet expressly in the holy Scriptures, which are his word, so he speaketh to us virtually, though not expressly by his works. And that, First, by his workes of creation; by them God is continually opening and manifesting himselfe to man in his wisdom, power, and goodnesse. He speaketh to us, Secondly, by his workes of providence, whether first they be workes of mercy (every mercy hath a voyce in it, every blessing a speech) or secondly, whether they be workes of judgement (*Micah 6. 9.*) *The Lords voyce cryeth unto the Citie; and the man of wisdom shall see thy name; heare ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.* Sickneses and losses, the crosses and troubles that we meet with in the world, cry aloud to us, especially when they make us (as they often doe) cry aloud. *As the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy worke, day unto day uttereth speech; and night unto night sheweth knowledge* (*Psal: 19. 1, 2.*) so those things that are done and acted night and day, utter the

mind and speak out the heart of God unto man.

For God speaketh once, yea twice.

בְּאַחַת
pro בְּפֶעַם
אֶחָד in una
vice.

The Hebrew is, *in once*, that is, for one *Turne* or *Time*, or by one meanes or way. The word *once*, hath a threefold significati-
on in Scripture, all which are applyable to the text in hand.

First, *Once*, is as much as surely, certainly, verily, irrevocably. Thus (*Psal: 89. 35.*) *Once have I sworne by my holinesse, that I will not lie unto David* ; That is, I have surely sworne, certainly sworne, irrevocably sworne, my word, yea my oath is out, and it is immutable ; That which God (in this sence) once saith, it is alwayes sayd, or 'tis sayd for ever ; how much more that which he swareth ? Thus the Apostle argueth (*Heb: 6. 17, 18.*) *God willing more abundantly* (or more then needed as to him and the truth of the thing in it self) *to shew unto the heires of promise the immutability of his counsel confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lye* (namely, his promise and his oath) *we might have strong consolation, &c.* In like notion we may expound that *once*, which we finde (*Heb: 9. 27.*) *And as it is appointed unto men once to die* (or to dye once) *and after that cometh the judgement.* Some referre, *once*, to dye, as if the meaning were, it is appointed unto men to dye once, that is, men must expect to dye a naturall death, which happens but *once*, and *once* (at least equivalently) will and must happen to all men. Others referre the *once* to appointed in the sence of this present exposition ; *It is appointed once* ; that is, God hath certainly and firmly appointed established and decreed this thing, he hath ratified it in heaven, that men must dye ; This statute is irrevocable ; The thing is appointed, and there is no reverfing or revoking of that appointment. This is a good sence, and futable enough to the scope of *Elihu* ; God speaketh *once*, that is, what he speaketh is a sure and certain word, an infallible word ; *the word settled for ever in heaven* (*Psal: 119. 89.*) his promise is not only sure but most sure. As the Apostle speakes (*2 Pet: 1. 18, 19.*) *And this voyce which came from heaven we heard when we were with him in the holy Mount. We have also a more sure* (the Comparative imports the Superlative, *a most sure*) *word of prophecy, whereunto ye doe well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a darke place, untill the day dawne and the day-starre arise in your hearts.*

hearts. As the whole propheticall, so the whole historicall and doctrinall word of God is most sure, being once spoken it is spoken for ever, *And written as with a pen of iron, and the point of a Diamond, and that upon a rocke which cannot be removed.* That which was vaine-gloriously, and beyond the line of man, sayd of the Law of the *Medes and Persians*, (Dan: 6. 8.) is only true of the word of God, it altereth not.

Secondly, This *once* speaking, notes the speaking of a thing so sufficiently or fully, that there is enough sayd at once, and so no more needs be sayd. The vulgar translation takes up this sence, *God hath spoken once* (that is, he hath spoken fully or sufficiently for mans instruction and admonition at once, and therefore he translates the latter part of the verse; thus; *And he doth not repeat it the second time.* That which is done at once sufficiently, needs not be done a second time; This is a truth; There is a sufficiency and a fullnesse in the word of God once spoken, there needs nothing to be added; or as others expound this translation. When once God speakes, that is, resolves and determines a thing, he doth not (as man who often repents of what he hath purposed) bring it into a second consideration, for he cannot erre, and therefore he needs decree but once. But though this be a truth, yet I doe not conceive it to be the meaning of this place, because it doth not well agree with what goes before, and lesse with that which followeth at the 29th verse; *Loe all these things worketh God oftentimes*, or (as our Margin hath it) *twice and thrice with man.* And therefore here *Elihu* rather intimates the variety of those wayes by which God reveales himselfe to man, then the sufficiency of any one of them. For though we grant any one of them sufficient, yet God out of his abundant goodnesse is pleased to reveale himselfe more wayes then one, and more times then once.

Thirdly, This *once*, may be taken exclusively; so in Scripture, *once* is *once* and *no more*, *once* and not againe; or as we say, *once for all*, and so it is opposed to the repeating and acting over of the same thing. Thus *Abisha* sayd to *David* (1 Sam: 26. 8.) *God hath delivered thine enemy into thine hand this day, now therefore let me smite him, I pray thee, with the speare, even to the earth at once, and I will not smite him the second time.* Once smiting is there opposed to smiting more then once; As if he had sayd, I

Semel loquitur deus, et secundo id ipsum non repetit. Vulg: Quia quod sufficienter factum est iterare superfluum est.
Aq:

will pay him home, or dispatch him at once, there will be no need to fetch another blow. Thus when the Apostle had sayd in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Chap. 9. 27.) *It is appointed unto men once to dye, and after this the judgement,* presently he addeth, *So Christ was once offered to beare the sins of many;* there also *once* is opposed to *twice*, or a second time, excluding all repetition of the sacrifice of Christ. As 'tis sayd (Heb. 10. 10.) *By the which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.* And therefore the same Apostle in the same Chapter (v. 26.) terrifieth Apostates with this dreadfull doome; *If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins;* that is, neither will Christ give up himselfe to be a sacrifice againe for such as have (after light received about it, and some seeming closings with it) cast off that his sacrifice, nor can any other sacrifice be given. In this sence also sometimes God speakes, *once*, He speakes *once* and will speake no more, *once* and not a second time; though we have a *twice* here in the text, yet, I say, in some cases and unto some persons, God speaketh *once* and will not speake againe. Whence take this observation or Admonition rather.

It is dangerous refusing the first call, the first Word of God. Possibly, you may never heare more of him or from him, once may be all.

God may speak in thy case, not only *once*, that is firmly and certainly, not only *once* that is sufficiently, but *once* (that is exclusively, *once*) and no more for ever. That moving caution of the Apostle is grounded upon such a sad possibilitie as this (Heb. 3. 7.) *Wherefore as the holy Ghost saith, to day if ye will heare his voyce, harden not your hearts;* and again (vers. 13.) *Exhort one another dayly, while it is called, to day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfullnesse of sin.* As if it had been said; heare to day, hear this hour of the day, for you know not, first, whether there will be a morrow or another day for you; secondly, if you have a morrow, yet you know not whether you shall have a word to morrow; both time and season, dayes and opportunities are in the hand of God; and he that neglects the season of one day, hath no assurance of another day, much lesse of a season with the day. Who knows whether the cock shall crow twice or no? possibly the
cock

cock may crow but once; in what a condition had *Peter* been if it had been so with him, for after he had (as *Christ* notwithstanding all his confidence to the contrary, told him (*Mark* 14. 30.) denied his Master thrice, he never called to mind the words of *Christ*, nor had any thought of humbling himself for what he had done, till (as 'tis said, *vers.* 72.) *The second time the Cock crew.* Every one hath not a promise (as *Peter* equivalently had) that the cock shall crow twice, or that God will afford him means a second time to awaken him out of his sin. That which the Lord spake of affliction, to shew the fullnesse of it, may also be fulfilled concerning his warnings and admonitions (*Nahum* 1. 9.) *I will make an utter end, affliction shall not rise up the second time:* We should hear at first speaking, lest it should prove that when the Lord hath spoken once, he should make an utter end, and say, instruction and admonition shall not rise up a second time. And to be sure, as *Abraham* after he had interceded for *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* severall times, said at last (*Gen.* 18. 32.) *O let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once.* So the Lord when he hath spoken oft to sinners and is not heard growes so angry, that he comes at last and saith, *I will speak yet but this once.* God will at last come to his, *but once* more to all men; and with some he is at his once at first and no more for ever. There is a time when every man shall hear his last word, and God will speak but that once; and sometimes it is but once in all that God will speak. Therefore take heed, it is dangerous deferrings if God speaks once, if he call & knock once, it is our sin & folly too, that we doe not hearken to, and open at his first call and knock, though the Lord doth (I grant) usually and mostly exercise much patience towards sinners, calling and knocking once and againe, as it followeth in the text, *He speaketh once.*

Tea twice, or a second time.

Severall of the Jewish writers interpret this *twice* of the two sorts or wayes of divine revelation which are spoken of in the following parts of this context; God speaks to man by visions and dreams; and God speaks to man by diseases and sicknesses, as we shall see afterward. But I rather take it more generally, not only as to the divers manner and distinct wayes of his speaking, but as to the divers times, or reiteration of his speaking; *he speaketh once.*

once, yea twice: As he speaks severall wayes, so severall times, twice or thrice, possibly, in the same way; twice by visions, twice by dreams, twice by sicknesses, and often by his Ministers; *He speak-*

In dubus et scilicet once,

vicibus. i.e. bis
quod uno verbo

dicunt פְּעַמַּיִם

aut secundo i.e.

iterum semel i-

terumq; loqui-

tur deus una

admonitione

non semper con-

tentus. Druf.

Yea twice.

I shall consider this *twice* three wayes, and give a brief note from each.

First, consider *twice* as to number; twice strictly taken is more then once. One is no number, but two is.

Hence note.

God is so gracious that he speaks once and againe, once and a second time to sinners.

Who is there among us that hath not had experience of Gods speaking to him more then once? And that not only with respect to the various wayes of speaking, but with respect to various times of speaking. He speakes more then once by his word, more then once by his workes, whether of judgment, or of mercy. Some sinners are consumed in a moment or at once, (as it is said of *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram* with their confederates (*Numb. 16. 21.*) others dye of a lingring consumption. God waiteth to be gracious, and therefore he rarely speaketh his all or striketh his all at once. He gives precept upon precept, line upon line, he sends sorrow upon sorrow, crosse upon crosse, that sinners may at last remember themselves, returne and live.

Secondly, As *twice* notes a number, so it may be considered as a small number, yea as the smallest number; twice or two is the first number, the first step into number. They that doe a thing more then once cannot do it lesse then twice, nor can that number which is more then one be lesse then two. When the woman in the book of *Kings* told the Prophet (*1 Kings 17. 12.*) *I am going to gather two sticks.* Her meaning was, a very few sticks, only enow to make a little fire to bake a Cake with. And when the Spirit of God would shew how few, comparatively to the rout of the World, they are and will be that bear witness to the truths of Jesus Christ, he calleth them two Witnesses (*Rev. 11. 3.*) they are a number, yet exprest by the lest number, that we should not have our eyes upon the multitude, or think, that is not the truth

truth which is not followed by great numbers, or the most of the World. The traine of Christ is not large, nor are his wayes throng'd, few there be that find them. As they whom he calls forth to be eminently his witnesses are not many, therefore called *two*; so they that receive their witnesses are not many; *The world wonders after the beast*. Thus as two or twice imply a small number; so in Scripture language, that which is done more then twice is supposed done often or many times (*2 Kings 6. 10.*) When the Prophet had told the King of *Israel* where the forces of the King of *Assyria* would come, and by that meanes defeated him of his purpose; it is said, *And the King of Israel sent unto the place which the man of God told him, and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once, nor twice*; that is, many times, which made the King of *Syria* wonder how it came to passe that he was so often defeated; he thought he had laid his plots so wisely and closely that the King of *Israel* could not escape, but he saved himself not once, nor twice; more then twice is many, but bare twice is the narrowest compasse of number imaginable.

Hence note.

God hath not given us any ground to presume upon frequent warnings or speakings.

Though he speake more then once, yet it may be but twice, possibly but twice precisely, probably but twice restrainedly taken. The Lord would not have us build upon the hope of future speakings, to the neglect of what is presently spoken. Though God be very patient and long-suffering to sinfull men, yet he hath not given any man, the least occasion, no nor by a promise of speaking a second day, to continue one day much lesse to continue long in sin. When God spake (as I may say) at the largest rate of his patience to sinners, he sayd (*Gen. 6. 3.*) *My spirit shall not alwayes strive with man; not alwayes*, that is, though it strive long, yet it shall not strive very long, and that he may know it, I will give him a day, *yet his dayes shall be an hundred and twenty yeares*. This was somewhat a long day indeed; But remember this hundred and twenty yeares, was all the time that was granted to all the men of that world, there was not so much granted to every particular man of that world, possibly the Spirit of God did not strive a day longer with many a one among them. Therefore take heed.

heed of presuming. When the Lord speaketh once, doe not say, I will stay till he speakes a second time, and if he condescend to speake twice, doe not believe that he will alwayes speake.

Thirdly, *Twice*, may be considered as a small certaine number, put for a small uncertaine number. 'Tis frequent in Scripture, to put a certaine number of any kinde, for an uncertaine; Sometimes a certaine great number, for an uncertaine great number; and sometimes a small certaine number, for a small uncertaine number. As twice is not to be tyed up strictly to the smallest number; so not to any number whether small or great.

Hence note.

No man knows how oft he shall be warned or spoken unto by God.

God doth not put an absolute stint upon any of his actions. Beware of neglecting the least twice, the first twice, which is the lowest twice; for though we cannot binde God up strictly to twice, it may prove three times or foure times, yet whether it shall be so many, or how many it shall be, no man nor Angel knoweth. Twice cannot be very often, and 'tis uncertaine how often. Therefore if you hearken not when God hath spoken once (take it strictly) doe not stop your eares at the second speaking. It is sayd, *Moses smote the rock twice* (that was twice beyond his Commission, for he should not have smitten it at all) *and the water came out abundantly*. How many rocks, that is, hard hearts, hath God smitten by his word and his workes twice, and yet we see not the waters of Godly sorrow flowing out; the rocks are smitten more then twice with the rod of God, with the rod of his mouth in the ministry of his word, they are smitten with admonition upon admonition, with reproofe upon reproofe, with threatening upon threatening, and yet the waters came not out abundantly, yea scarce at all. May not they feare that they shall have penall sorrow upon sorrow (Paul tooke notice of the goodnesse of God to him, that he did not let him have afflictive sorrow upon sorrow (Phil: 2. 27.) but, I say, may not they feare they shall have penall sorrow upon sorrow) that is, everlasting floods of sorrow, who after the Lords speaking upon speaking, and reproving upon reproving, give no prooffe of their godly penitentiall sorrow? Ohow angry was the Lord with *Solomon*, because his heart was turned from the Lord God of Israel, which had appeared

to him twice (1 Kings 11. 9.) God appeared to him in *Gibeon* (1 Kings 3. 5.) when he was first made King, putting him to his choice, or giving him a blanke to aske what he would, and he chose well, he chose wisdom and had it. God appeared to him a second time after the building and dedication of the Temple (1 Kings 9. 2.) *And said unto him, I have heard thy prayer, and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me, &c.* Thus the Lord appeared solemnly unto *Solomon* twice, and but twice for any thing that appeares upon record in that solemne manner. Now when notwithstanding these two appearings of the Lord to *Solomon*, the heart of *Solomon* was turned away from the Lord God of *Israel*, his anger was kindled against *Solomon*, and the Lord smote him once, yea twice, renting his kingdome, and pulling away ten tribes at once, from his son and successor. O doe not refuse God speaking to you twice, or the renewed speaking of God; to doe so is very sinfull, and therefore very dangerous. For as 'tis a signe of a holy heart, of a gracious frame of spirit, to heare twice at once speaking; as *David* professed he did (*Psal. 62. 11.*) *God hath spoken once; twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God: also unto thee O Lord belongeth mercy.* There are severall rendrings and interpretations of those words; But that which to me seemes most intended by our rendring is, I heard what was once spoken twice at once, that is, I heard it speedily, and I heard it believingly; as soon as ever the word came to me I received it, and I received it not only with my eare, but with my heart. That's a blessed way of hearing, and they who heare so, at first speaking, may well be sayd to heare that twice which God speaketh once. But how sad is it that God should speake twice, thrice, yea foure times, and yet not be heard so much as once! When *Job* was brought upon his knees (*Chap. 40. 5.*) he said, *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer: yea twice but I will proceed no further.* *Job* began to be sensible of that which *Elihu* was working him to, that he had been too forward, yea too forward with God; *Job* began to see his error, and recanted it; *I have spoken once, yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* 'Tis good, that after once or twice sinning or failing, we yet say we will proceed no further. O how deplorable is mans condition, when the Lord shall say, I have spoken once, yea twice, but now I will proceed no further, I will speake no more! And this usually comes to passe,

when men are dull and slow of heart to understand what he speaketh, which as naturall men alwayes, so godly men often are, as it followeth in this text ; *He speaketh once, yea twice,*

Yet man perceiveth it not.

That is, apprehendeth not sometimes that God is speaking to him, and he seldome understandeth what God is speaking to him.

There is a little varietie in the exposition of this latter clause of the verse ; The word *man* not being expressly in the Hebrew (and therefore we finde it put by our translators in a distinct character) the text runs only thus ; *God speaketh once, yea twice, he perceiveth it not.* This hath occasion'd the vulgar latine interpreter to referre this last clause of the verse to God also ; giving out the sence thus ; *God speaketh once, and a second time he doth not repeate it ;* As if here were a warning given, that all should attend the very first motion of Gods voyce to them ; *For he speaketh once, and doth not repeate the same.* But I shall not stay upon that, because I see not how the Hebrew word by us rendred to

*Semel loquitur
deus et secundo
id ipsum non
repetit. Vulg.*

*אֵל וְשׁוּבָה
dice in eundem
oculos prosperit,
animadvertit,
viderit.*

*Semel loquitur
deus et secundo
illud non consi-
derat. Scult:*

perceive, can with any tolerable significancy be rendred to repeate : yet, there is a second rendring of the text in the same renour, giving a genuine sence of that word, which is very profitable and proper enough to the scope of the place, *God speaketh once, and he doth not consider upon it a second time ;* That is, when God speaks or decrees to give forth any thing, he doth not take it into consideration againe or review and bring it about upon second thoughts, as men often doe ; yea it is their duty (though it be a duty arising from their frailty) so to doe. Men ought to consider often and review their owne words as well as their works. But (saith *Elihu*, according to this reading) *God speaks once, and doth not consider of it againe ;* for he hath the measure and compasse of all things so fully in-himselfe, that he needs not turne backe his thoughts upon any of his determinations, as if there could be a mistake, or any error in them. This is a very glorious truth, highly advancing the name of God above every name among the best of the children of men. And it ariseth clearly from the text, leaving out the suppliment which we make of the word *man*. Yet according to the opinion of the most and best expositors, yea according to the clearest scope and tendency of the text, that

word

word *man* is rather to be supplied, *God speaketh once, yea twice,*

And man perceiveth it not.

'Tis common in Scripture to leave such words unexpressed, as must necessarily be understood. And therefore I shall only insist upon our owne translation.

Yet before I proceed to that, I shall touch upon another reading of these words, as referring unto man, which doth not so much carry a reproofe of mans dullnesse, as a commendation of Gods goodnesse, thus; *God speaks once, yea twice, if man perceiveth it not.* As if he had sayd, *If man be so weake and darke, so dull and slow of apprehension, as not to perceive Gods minde at his first speaking, yet God is usually so gracious and condescending as to speake twice, or a second time, even to that man.* This reading doth exceedingly exalt and set forth the goodnesse and graciousnesse of God; and we have frequent experience of it, that when God speakes once, and findes creatures dull of hearing, he speakes a second time.

Our reading gives in these words as a charge of mans darknesse and slownesse to apprehend the meaning of God speaking to us either in his word or works. *God speaks once, yea twice,*

Yet man perceiveth it not.

The Hebrew is, *man seeth it not.* There is an eye in the understanding, the mind of man beholdeth the sence of words, even as his bodily eye beholdeth the colours, and dimensions of any materiall object: Yet the eye of mans mind is so bleared and dim-sighted that though God speak once, yea twice, he seeth, he perceiveth it not. That is, he doth not clearly perceive it. *Elihu* makes use of this word six times, *Job* thrice, *Zophar* once, in all which places, they intend an exact observation and through speculation of the matter which they treat upon, either in the affirmative or in the negative; here as a rebuke to man *Elihu* makes use of it in the negative, *man perceiveth it not.*

לא יִשׁוּר נָה
Non viderit il-
lud, sc: homo
quod deus lo-
quitur. Verbo
hoc שֵׁשׁ Elihu
uitur sexies
Job ter Zophar
semel; Videtur
isto verbo dili-
gens et clara
significari spe-
culatio et obser-
vatio curiosa.
Coc.

Hence note.

Man of himself cannot perceive the mind of God in spirituall speakings, or God speaking about spirituall things.

The propheticall Sermons are called visions; *The vision of Isa-*

iah the son of Amos, which he saw (Ila. 1. 1.) yet when they preached them to the people, many of them saw nothing; their visions were to the people as parables or darke sayings. Man in generall falls under a twofold consideration; first, as unconverted or carnall; and in that state he perceiveth not at all, when God speaks once and twice, yea thrice, he perceiveth nothing. And that proceeds from a double ground.

First, from the naturall pravity of his heart, and the blindness of his mind. Of such the Apostle saith (Eph. 4. 18.) *They have their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.* And hence he concludes (1 Cor. 2. 14.) *The naturall man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishnesse to him, neither can he know them, because they are spirituallly discerned;* spirituall objects must have a spirituall eye to see them.

Secondly, this comes to passe sometimes from the judgment of God upon carnall men; who as in mercy he causeth the blind to see, so in wrath he striketh those that have no mind to see with greater blindness, and punisheth their former rebellion and obstinacy against the word received with an impotency to perceive it. Yea God doth not only leave such in the blindness of their mind and dullnesse of their understanding, but gives them up to it. The Prophet *Isaiah* was a Gospel Preacher, he held out the light clearly, yet his hearers were under such a doome, that the very light which he held out blinded them; so that the more he spake the lesse they perceived (Isa. 6. 10.) *And he said, go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not: make the heart of this people fat, and make their eares heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their eares, and understand with their hearts, and convert, and be healed.* This is a dreadfull Scripture; The Lord is highly provoked indeed, when he judicially shuts up the eyes of men, and hardens their hearts against his own messages, not that he infuseth any hardness or instilleth any ignorance into them, but gives them up to that ignorance hardness and darkness which already possesseth them. And then though God speak once or twice, or a hundred times, they perceive it not: They that harden their hearts, shall have them hardened by that which is the ordinary means:

meanes to soften and melt them ; and they that shut their eyes against any truth, are in danger of having them shut against all truth, even by that means which usually openeth eyes. Thus we see that this first sort of men, meere carnall men, cannot see or perceive when God speaketh, and why it is so.

Secondly, (which I conceive rather to be the meaning of *Elihu* here) Man may be considered in his spirituall state. That is, as converted and renewed in spirit, by the mighty working of the Spirit. Now to men in this estate God speakes once, yea twice, *and they perceive it not.* They that are spirituall doe not alwayes perceive spirituall things. For

First, they have much corruption in them. Though they are renewed, yet they are renewed but in part ; we see in part and but darkly, yea sometimes Saints can hardly see at all, especially as to some dispensations and manifestations of God ! he may speak once, yea twice and thrice to them in such a thing, or to such a purpose, and they take little or no notice of it. He may poynt unto them by such providences, and by such Sermons, and yet they look upon themselves as un-concerned, not making any home-application of what they outwardly hear or see, yea feele and smart under ; and all this by reason of some prevailing corruption.

Secondly, this may proceed from their negligence and slothfullnesse ; good men are not alwayes carefull as they should, much lesse criticall and wisely curious to observe every providence of God, and to consider why or for what end such or such a word is sent to them. As carnall men thrust the word from them, so godly men faile much at all times, and at some times wholly neglect to lay the word to heart. They doe not compare themselves, that is, their lives and consciences, their thoughts and wayes with the word, and then no wonder if they perceive not what is spoken to them. Even a *Job* may be hindred by his own indulgence from perceiving what God saith unto him. The Prophet complained of the people of God for not striving to take hold of him. (*Isa. 64. 7.*) *There is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold on thee.* And may we not complaine that few stirre up themselves either to take hold of the word of God, or that the word may take hold of them ? *Paul* exhorted *Timothy* (*2 Tim. 1. 6.*) *to stir up the Gift of God that was in him.* They that have received both gifts and grace may be much wanting to themselves
in

in stirring them up. Though we deny mans naturall power, yet persons converted have a spirituall power, which they often neglect to stir up. When the servants of *Benhadad* (*1 Kings 20. 32, 33.*) came to *Ahab* upon that message to beg his life, it is said, *The men did dilligently observe whether any thing would come from him that they might take hold of; and urge it in favour of their Master; and as soon as Ahab had dropt that word, he is my Brother, as soon as they had that word, they did hastily catch it and applied it for their present purpose.* So they that are godly should observe what is spoken unto them, what corruption is smitten by the word or by the rod of God, and as soone as ever such a word is spoken, they should take it up and apply it to themselves.

Thirdly, those many lusts that are in the heart of a godly man, not yet fully mortified, as secret pride, self-love, and unbelief, these hinder him from understanding the mind of God. And therefore we are counselled by the Apostle *James* (*Chap. 1. 21.*) to lay aside (that is, to get subdued and mortified) *all filthinesse and superfluity of naughtinesse, and (so) receive with meeknesse the engrafted word which is able to save our souls.* As if he had said, we can neither perceive nor receive the word savingly, unlesse our lusts are cast out and cast off. How much any man neglects this duty of mortifying his lusts, by so much is he rendred both unable to perceive the word, and unfit to profit by it.

Lastly, Mr. *Broughton* renders the words thus, *God speaks once, yet twice, and man will not mark it.* We say, *man perceiveth it not; he saith, man will not mark it.* As our reading shews the weakness and imperfections, or the negligence and slothfullnesse of man, when he doth not perceive what God speaketh; so his sheweth the obstinacy of man. The will of man is as perverse, as his understanding is blind. Man hath not only a wound or a weaknesse in his will unto that which is good, but he hath a rebellion in his will against that which is good, and that not by some occasionall disgust or sudden gust of passion, but he is naturally set and resolved against that which is good. *Man will not mark what God speaketh in his word and works.* Christ upbraids the *Jeus* (*Joh. 5. 40.*) *Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life; he chargeth the fault upon their wills.* 'Tis certaine *man hath a will not to come to Christ for life; yet that is a forced and farre fetcht inference which some make from it, that man hath therefore power and will*

will to come. Sure enough man hath a will not to come, he hath not only an inability, but an enmity and an opposition in his will against Christ: he will not come to Christ that he may be saved, but would take up his salvation somewhere else; he would be his own Saviour, or let any one save him, rather than be saved by Christ; all things considered, especially this, that he must deny himself, and neither be found trusting to his own righteousness, nor acting any unrighteousness, if he desires to be saved by Christ. And as there is a resistance in the will of man against the true dispensation of Gospell grace; so against any other dispensation whereby God speaketh to him. The unchanged will of man riseth up against the will of God manifested in his works, as much as against his will manifested in his word (*Isa. 26. 11.*) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up they will not see.* If his hand be lifted up in publick judgments they will not see it, if in family or personall judgments and afflictions they will not see it, but shut their eyes and hoodwink their own understandings. Yea, they are oftentimes so wilfully, or rather so madly blind, that they had rather say it is the hand of *blind Fortune*, then the hand of the Almighty and All-seeing God. *Now who is so blind as they that will not see?* Till this rebellion against the holy will of God with which the will of man is filled be cast out and subdued, let him speake once, yea twice, let him speake by word or works, by promises or by threatnings, by good or evill, yet man will not mark it. Thus much in generall of Gods revealing himself to man; In the next words we have the distinct wayes set downe by and in which he revealeth himself: *In a dreame &c.*

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 15, 16, 17, 18.

*In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep
falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed :*

*Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their in-
struction.*

*That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and
hide pride from man.*

*He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life
from perishing by the sword.*


ELibu having said in the former verse, that, *God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not*; proceeds to give instance of those severall wayes by which God speaketh to man. His first Instance is given (v. 15.) where he brings in God speaking to man in dreams and visions. And as he shews us God speaking in dreams and visions, so he sets downe his aymes or ends in doing so, and they are three-fold.

First, God aimes at mans instruction (v. 16.) *Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.*

The second aime of God in such dispensations, is repentance and humiliation (v. 17.) *That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.*

The third and last end here exprest why God speaks by dreams and visions, is mans salvation (v. 18.) *He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.* These are the parts and specialties considerable in this context.

Vers. 15. *In a dream, in a vision of the night, &c.*

 *pinguis
grossus, ex va-
poribus crassis
provenit som-
nus, quem som-
nia consequun-
tur.*

The roote of the word rendred *a dreame*, signifieth that which is thick, grosse or fat, and by a metaphor *a dreame*, because dreams are naturally caused by gross and thick vapours, arising from the stomach & fuming up into the head. Sleep is caused immediately by vapours and dreams are our work in sleep. *A dream is an Imagination which the minde frames and formes, or which is formed and framed in the minde while we sleepe*; or, *A dream is the worke of the soule, while the body is asleepe.* Sleepe is the binding
up

up of the outward senses, hearing, seeing, feeling, &c. yet then the inward senses, phantasie and memory are at liberty and free to worke. The phantasie is very quick and nimble, when the body lieth as a logge and stirres not. The phantasie (as we say) builds Castles in the ayre, and makes strange Chimera's in the braine by day, much more by night. In Dreams, there is an image of things or persons represented to us. When *Pharaoh dreamed, he saw seven leane kine, and seven thin ears, as also seven fat kine and seven full ears of corne.* Jacob saw a ladder in his dreame reaching up to heaven, and the Angels of God ascending and descending. *Joseph* saw his brethrens sheaves doing obeysance to his sheafe, he saw also the Sun and Moone and eleven Starrs, doing obeysance to him. *Nebuchadnezzar* dreaming saw an Image with the head of gold, with shoulders and breast of silver, with belly and thighs of brasse, and leggs of Iron, &c. These dreamers had images as clearely represented to their mindes, as any thing can be to the most waking and wakefull eye of the body. And though in many dreams there are no such formall similitudes presented to the mind, but only a voyce heard speaking, yet nothing can be declared to us in a dreame without forming in our mind some kind of likenesse. When it is sayd that God came to *Abimelech* (*Gen: 20.* and to *Laban* *Gen: 31.*) and an Angel of the Lord to *Joseph* (*Mith: 1.*) speaking to them in dreames, they had such things exhibited to and impressed upon them, as gave the former two assurance that God spake to them, and the third that he was spoken to by an Angel of God.

Further, We may distinguish of dreames; First, some are meere naturall dreames; and they arise foure wayes; First, from the temperature of the body, Melancholly and flegmaticke persons, have their speciall dreames, and so have men of a sanguine and of a cholericke complexion. The first encline to dreame of sad, the second of sortish, the third of pleasant things, and the last of wrathfull wranglings and contendings. Secondly, Naturall dreames are caused by the diet or food which we eate, speciall meate inclining to speciall thoughts and imaginations. Thirdly, Meere naturall dreams flow from the buisness or speciall worke wherein we have been engaged in the day; as *Solomon* speaks (*Eccles: 5. 3.*) *a dreame cometh thorow the multitude of buisness*; that is, a man dreams at night of what he hath been doing

ing in the day. Fourthly, Naturall dreames arise from vehement affections to or desires of what we want, and would have. Thus (*Isa: 29. 7.*) *The hungry man dreams he eats, and the thirsty man dreams he drinks*; For being pincht with hunger, and parcht with thirst, his appetite is not only strong, but fierce and violent after meat and drinke. These and such like are naturall dreames. I call them so because, the rise or reason of them is seated in nature; and they are such as have no other cause but what is common and naturall to man. Nature let alone or left under such outward accidents will produce such dreames.

Secondly, There are diabolicall dreames; the devill knows how to stirre the humors and worke upon the phantasies of the children of men. Satan is skilfull and diligent in soliciting our lusts and corruptions both day and night, and they being once solicited or moved to worke, cannot but worke in us both sleeping and waking. Yea the devill. can inspire. false doctrines and opinions by dreames; as well as provoke to wicked practises. Of such dreamers we read (*Dent: 13. 1, 3.*) *If there be among you a false Prophet, or a dreamer of dreames.* False Prophets had many dreams (*Jer: 23. 25.*) Such were wont to say, *I have dreamed, I have dreamed.* Because the holy Prophets had their dreams from God, the Devill would give his unholy Prophets dreams too, which were lies and vanity, deceits and errors, leading them out of the way of God, whether we respect truth of doctrine, or purity of worship. We may reduce all diabolicall dreames to these two heads; They are either, First, false dreames, that is, dreames of falshood, for he is the father and former of lyes; or, Secondly, they are filthy defiling dreames; for he is an uncleane spirit, and the faweller of all filthy fires and uncleanneesses, whether corporall or spirituall.

Thirdly, There are *divine dreames*, so called, First, because immediately sent by God; Secondly, because the subject matter of them is divine and heavenly, or some manifestation of the holy will of God to man. There are five speciall Messages upon which dreames are sent from God.

First, To reprove or admonish; Thus God dealt with *Abimelech* in a dreame, that he should not meddle with *Sarah*. (*Gen: 20. 3.*) and with *Laban*, that he should not hurt *Jacob*, nor hinder him in his journey back to his fathers house (*Gen: 31.*

24.) whereupon *Jacob* told him, *God rebuked thee yester night.* That dream of *Pilate* wife (*Math: 27. 19.*) was sent to admonish *Pilate* about giving Judgement against Christ.

Secondly, God sends dreams to instruct, and informe; There are teaching dreams, that of *Joseph* (*Math: 1. 21.*) was not only to shew him what to doe about *Mary* his espoused wife, but to instruct him about that Great mystery of God manifested in the flesh, to save lost man.

Thirdly, Dreams are sent for support and consolation in a time of trouble (*Gen: 28. 12.*) God comforted *Jacob* by that dream, when he was in a desolate condition, and assured him of his presence.

Fourthly, Some dreams are sent of God upon a sad message to afflict and terrifie; *Job* bemoaned his sufferings and torrows by such dreames (*Chap: 7. 13, 14.*) *When I say my bed shall comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint, then thou scarest me with dreames, and terrifiest me with visions.*

Fifthly, God foresheweth what shall come to passe, he reveals his own counsels, as to future providences, by dreames and visions. The seven years of famine were revealed to *Pharaoh* in a dreame. And the great things of the Church, and of the world too, were revealed to *Daniel* in a dreame, and in visions of his head upon his bed (*Dan: 7. 1.*) The message of the dreame in the text was for instruction and admonition, as will appeare at the sixteenth verse; God speaketh *in a dream*; and further

In a vision of the night.

Some take *vision* here as a second way of divine revelation. And 'tis true, the Scripture speakes of dreams and visions distinctly (*Numb: 12. 6.*) Others make visions to be only appurtenances to dreams; For though there have been visions without dreams, yet dreams are seldome, if at all, without some kind of vision. This seemes the intendment of this text, *In a dream, in a vision of the night*; That is, in a dream with a vision of the night, as making the vision to be nothing else, but either a representation of the matter dreamed of, or of the manner wherein it was represented to the dreamer. And I conceive, that *Elihu* in this verse is speaking only of one, not of two wayes of Gods revealing himselfe to man; or rather of one then two. Yet whether we

take the vision distinctly from or joyntly with the dream, the scope of *Elihu* in this text is equally answered and fulfilled.

Further, *Elihu* doth not only report the way of Gods discovering himselfe, that is, in a dream, in a vision, but he declares the time or season of these dreams and visions, or of these visions in a dream; that is, *the night*, and the night considered under this division.

First, *when deep sleep falleth upon men.*

Secondly, When they have their *slumberings upon their bed*; that is (as I apprehend) at the beginning of the night, and break of day (for those are the slumbring times of the night) or in the middle of the night or midnight, for then usually men are fallen into and abide in a deep sleep, or as we render, Then

Deep sleep falleth upon men.

Some sleeps, as we may say, are but shallow sleeps, slight sleeps, in comparison of other; Deep sleep is that which we call, Dead sleep. The word here used by *Elihu*, notes the strongest and the soundest sleep, and therefore 'tis fitly distinguished from *slumberings upon the bed*.

תדרמה *plu*
et quam שנה
et שנה *plu*
est quam
חנומה
Aben Ezra.

There are three words in the Hebrew which signifie *sleep*; whereof the first signifies *sleep* in generall; the second, *deep sleep*; the third, any *slight sleep*, which we here translate *slumbering*. Ordinary sleeping is more then slumbring, and a deep sleep, more then ordinary sleep; we commonly say, such a man *is fast asleep*, he is, as it were, bound hand and foote. Sleep is the binding of the senses, and so, by consequence the binding of all the members of the body. We often finde this distinction in Scripture (Psal: 132. 4.) *I will not give sleep to mine eyes, nor slumber to my eye-lids*; that is, I will not only not give my selfe to fall asleep, but I wil not so much as (according to our manner of speaking in that matter) forget my selfe. We finde the same distinction (Ps: 121. 4.) *Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep*. The words are a description of the exact watchfulness of God over his people, he that doth not so much as *slumber*, he that never lays his eyes together, he that doth not only not take a nap (as we say) but not so much as once nod (to so little the Hebrew word may be drawne downe, which is likewise the importance of the Greek word; he, I say, that doth not so much as nod)

נו aliquan-
do simpliciter
redditur dormi-
re; Grace est
רוא'ז'uy pro-
prie capite nu-
tante dormire.
Bold:

nod) is farre from sleepe, furthest of all from deep sleep. In both these degrees of sleep, the Lord speakes by Dreames, first, *in deep sleep*; Secondly, *in slumbrings*.

Some conceive that *Elihu* intended by these different words, to set forth two sorts of dreams; First, those dreams which men have when extraordinary deep sleep falls upon them; such as that spoken of (*Gen. 2. 21.*) *God commanded a deep sleep to fall on Adam*, when he tooke the rib out of his side and formed the woman. We read also (*Gen. 15. 12.*) that a deep sleep fell on *Abraham* when God revealed to him what should become of his posterity, and how they should be in *Egypt*, and there much oppressed foure hundred yeares, &c. It is said also (*1 Sam. 26. 12.*) *A deep sleep from the Lord was fallen upon them*; that is, upon *Saul*, and his guards, who lay round about him. And that might be called a sleep from the Lord, both because it was a sleep which the Lord sent, and because it was an extream deep sleep. Secondly, there are dreams in ordinary sleep, or in very slumbrings or noddings upon the bed, we may call them waking dreames. Thus *Elihu* sheweth God taking severall times or seasons for the revealing of himselfe in dreams; sometimes in deep sleep, and often in the least and slightest sleeps, called slumbrings.

I shall not here insist upon or discourse the way of Gods manifesting himselfe to the Ancients, by dreams & visions, but referre the Reader to what hath already been done upon the 4th Chapter at the 12th and 13th verses; where *Eliphaz* speaks almost in the same manner as *Elihu* here about visions; And, indeed there is a very great Consent between their two parts in this booke, that of *Eliphaz*, and this of *Elihu*; They were both holy and prophetical men, both of them had the same designe in speaking about dreams and visions, namely, to convince and humble *Job*; and both of them expresse themselves in terms of a very neere Cognation. So that if the reader please to consult that place (*Job 4. 12, 13.*) he will find these words farther cleared, as to the nature and severall kinds of visions. And if he turne to what hath been done upon the 14th verse of the 7th Chapter, he may find the doctrine of dreams further opened.

Only let me adde here a note or two.

First, *It hath been the use of God to reveale his mind by dreams.*

And

And I may give you five reasons why God used to apply himself to man in dreams : First, because in sleep man is, as I may say, at best leisure for God to deal with him ; he is not distracted with businesse, nor hurried with the labours of this life, but is at rest. Secondly, when we are awake we are very ready to debate and discusse what we receive by our own reason, we are ready to Logick it with God ; but in sleep we take things barely as offered without discussions or disputes. Thirdly, in sleepe when all is quiet, that which God represents, takes and leaves a deeper impression upon the mind of man. Common experience teacheth us how dreams stick, and how those apprehensions which we have in our sleep dwell & abide with us when awake. Fourthly, I conceive the Lord doth this chiefly that he may shew his divine skill in teaching & instructing man, or that he hath a peculiar art in teaching ; he teaches so, as none of the masters of learning were ever able to teach and instruct their Schollars. There was never any man could reach another when he was asleep ; they that are taught must at least be awake, yea they must not only be awake but watchfull ; but now God is such a teacher, such an instructor, that when we are asleep he can convey instruction and reach us his lessons ; this (I say) doth wonderfully magnifie the divine skill and power of God, who is able to make us heare and understand doctrine even when we are asleep and cannot heare. There may be also a fifth consideration moving God to this. Possibly God would hereby assure us, that the soul is a distinct essence, and hath its distinct operations from the body ; and that even death it self cannot deprive the soul of man of its working. For what is sleep but a kind of death ? *sleep is a short death, and death is along sleepe.* Now when the body is (upon the matter) laid aside, the soul can goe to work ; when the body lyes like a block and stirs not, the soul can bestir it self about many matters, and run its thoughts to the utmost ends of the earth, yea and raise them up to the highest heavens, in blessed intercourses with God himself. There's no need to prove the matter of fact that 'tis so ; what night, with reference to some or other, doth not utter this poynt of knowledge ? nor need I stay to prove that this is, if not a demonstrative, yet a very probable argument of the distinct substantiallity of the soul from the body, namely its operations when the body (with all its proper and peculiar faculties and powers) is a sleepe, and contri-
butes

butes nothing to those operations. For though it be granted that some irrational creatures (who have no immortal part, nor any thing substantiall in them distinct from their bodies, though it be granted I say, that these) may have dreames; yet their dreams differ as much from those of men, as themselves doe.

Secondly Note,

The revelation of the mind of God by dreams and visions, was much, yea most used in those ancient times. When God had not so fully revealed his mind by Scripture or his mind in the Scripture, then he spake often in dreams and visions; and hence the old Prophets were called seers.

The Apostle reports, God speaking at sundry times, and in divers manners in times past, unto the fathers by the Prophets, (*Heb. 1. 1.*) The Greek text hath two very significant words, *πλημῆρες* & *πολυτρόπως*, the former most properly implying how God gave out his mind in divers measures, or how he parcelled it out, the other implying the severall wayes in which he gave it out. As the measures were various, sometimes more sometimes lesse of his mind about divine matters and mysteries being dispersed, so the wayes manners and formes of this dispensation were very various; yet the most usuall way was by dreams and visions (*Numb. 12. 6.*) *If there be a Prophet among you (saith the Lord) I the Lord will make my self known unto him in a vision, and speak to him in a dream.* Yea we find that in the first dayes of the Gospel, dreames and visions were frequent. The Apostle falling into a trance had a vision (*Acts 10. 10.*) *He saw heaven opened and a certain ve,* descend, &c. And when Christ would have the Apostle Paul cary the Gospell into Macedonia, a vision appeared to him in the night (*Acts 16. 9.*) *There stood a man of Macedonia, and pray him, saying, come over to Macedonia and help us.* The same Apostle saith (*2 Cor. 12. 1, 2.*) *I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord, whether in the body I cannot tell, or out of the body cannot tell.* Pauls soul was wrapt up in such high and intimate converse with God, that he even forgot how it was with his body, or had little to doe with it. Which suites well with that description which the Apostle John gave of himself, when he had the whole mind of God concerning the state of his Church to the end of the world, revealed to him in severall visions, *I (saith he Rev. 1. 10.)*

was in the spirit on the Lords day, &c. That's is a famous promise, which was first reported by the Prophet Joel (Chap: 2. 28.) and after repeated by the Apostle Peter (Acts 2. 17.) *I will poure out my Spirit upon all flesh, &c. and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.* Thus it is every where clear in Scripture, that dreames and visions were frequent both in the Old Testament times; and in the beginning of the New;

But now in these last dayes (as the Apostle saith Heb. 1. 2,3. passing from thoe former wayes of Revelation described in the first verse) God having spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the Worlds, who is [also] the brightnesse of his glory, and the expresse Image of his person: God I say having spoken to us by his Son, and we having now a clearer manifestation of the mind of God then the old fathers had, the Son who once spake to us in person on earth, still speaking to us in the Gospell every day ; therefore now for any to look after dreams and visions, or visible apparitions for the revealing of the mind of God, is to goe backward to the old state of the Jewish Church, or to the infancy of the Gospell Church, while the Canon or Rule of the Scripture as to all matters of faith and holy life was not fully finished and compleated. And though we ought to be farre from limiting God, yet he hath limited us from looking after any wisdom in the knowledge of his will above that which is written (1 Cor. 4. 6.) The Apostle also testifying by the Spirit of God, that the Scripture is sufficient to make every man wise to salvation and the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works (that good work especially of helping others to salvation) 1 Tim. 3. 15. 17.

Luther observing how many were deluded in his time by dreames and visions, which they falsely attributed to God, as the immediate Author of them ; earnestly prayed about two things : First, that God would give him a sound understanding of his mind revealed in the Scriptures. Secondly, that he would not send him dreames or visions, yea, saith he, I even contracted with God that he would not. And doubtlesse he did this upon a double ground. First, to oppose the wild opinions and practices of those, who had nothing to pretend for them but dreames and visions. Secondly, to advance the honour of the written word in its sufficiency, not only

Ardentibus votis precatus sum ut daret mihi deus certū sensum scripturæ; et pactum feci cum domino deo meo ne mihi visiones vel somnia mitteret.
Luth. loci com. quartæ classis.

only without the help of any humane tradition, but without any further divine revelation. And therefore though God should please to speak to us now by dreames and visions, yet that were only (as the Apostle speaks about his adding of an oath to his promise (*Heb. 6. 17.*) to shew that he is (*ex abundanti*) more abundantly willing to satisfie our weaknesse by such a condescension, then that there is a necessity of it, with respect to any deficiency of the Scriptures fullnesse. And hence it is, that if men shall profess they have received any thing from God by dreams or visions, concerning what is either to be beleaved or done, the matter of those dreams must be examined and weighed at the ballance of the Scriptures, and is no further to be credited then as 'tis found agreeable therunto.

It cannot be denied but that men may make profitable use of their dreames at this day; they may see much of themselves when their eyes are shut up by sleepe. Evill men may see their lusts at worke in the night, and find out what lust is most working and wakefull in them. What is said in History of the ancient Persian Kings, that they were seldome seen in the day, but came to view in the night, is true of a mans speciall sin, or of that sin which reignes and Kings it in him. What ugly apparitions of lust hath many a man in his nightly dreams, especially of those filthy lusts which are most proper to the night? Thus also good men have sometimes a clearer sight of their graces in the night by dreames, then in the duties of the day. What holy frames of heart? what lively actings of grace? what sweet and ravishing communion with God have many godly men found and felt in dreames? That may at leſt, be somewhat of *Dauids* meaning, when he said (*Psal. 16. 17.*) *My reines. also instruct me in the night season.*

Lastly, Though we cannot make any certaine conclusions, either what we are, or what we are to doe from dreames; yet from them they who are wise and watchfull may sometimes gather strong conjectures about both or either. To make dreames the rule or warrant of what we doe is extreemly dangerous, yet that we may have hints what to do in a dreame, I nothing doubt, nor can there be any danger in it, while the matter hinted is consonant to the rule of the word, both as that which is lawfull to be done, and lawfull for us (all circumstances considered) to doe. Other-

wife, whatsoever we may think our selves warned or warranted to doe by dreames, is but a mock or trick put upon us by the Devill, or a deceit of our own foolish selfish hearts.

Thus we have seene the first way of Gods speaking to men of old, *by dreames and visions of the night*; what work God is pleased to make with and in man by such speakings, will appeare distinctly in the three following verses.

Vers. 16. *Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction.*

In this verse *Elihu* gives us the first of those gracious designed or purposes of God in sending dreams or visions of the night; *then he openeth the ears of men*. There is a twofold eare of man, first, externall, that organ of hearing placed in the head. Secondly; internall, that power of hearing seated in the heart. God can uncover or open both. There are but few who have their outward eare stoppt, we rarely meet with a deaf man. But we every where meete with and speak to those who are internally deafe. The Lord openeth this inward eare, and he only is able to doe it. *God opened the heart* (or internall eare) *of Lydia to attend to the things which were spoken of Paul* (Acts 16. 14.) The Septuagint render this place of *Job* expressly so. *Then he openeth the mind of men*. Their translation comes close to the sence, though not to the letter of the Originall.

τοτε ανακα-
λυπτει νοον
αυτων. Sep.

Quidam hanc loquendi formulam natam esse putant ex hebraeorum consuetudine, qui cum antiquis seculis prolixam alerent comam, eaq; aures operirent, si quis arcana

Further, the Hebrew is (as we put in the Margin) *He revealeth or uncovereth the eares of men*. This revealing or uncovering of the eare, say some, noteth only private speaking, and is a similitude taken from a common custome among men, who when they would convey their mind secretly to a friend that stands by, put their head near to his eare, and take up the brim of his hat, or put by his haire (if long) that they may whisper in his eare. This in a dreame God whispers and speaks silently unto men! This seems to have a sutablenesse with that (Chap. 4. 12, 13.) where *Eliphaz* spake of a thing brought secretly to him, or that was whispered or stoln into him. But I conceive there is more in this place then the intendment of a secret and private conveyance of the mind of God unto man in a vision or dreame.

And therefore this opening of the eare imports the removing
or

or taking away of that (whatsoever it is) which hinders the effectuall hearing or obeying of those messages which God sends to men. When God spake in a dream, he did more then speak, he open'd the ear, yea, he gave an eare to hear : This powerfull work of God upon the heart is elegantly expressed by *opening* the eare, because when the ears are stoppt, we cannot hear, till that which stopps them is pluckt out or taken away ; so that here we have speaking with effect, or the cleare and penetrating power of the Spirit of God sweetly and prevailingly insinuating his mind to man. God speaks so as he will be heard.

Hence Observe.

First, *The eare of man is naturally stoppt against the teachings of God.*

There are many things which stop the eares of man, or man hath many eare stoppers. I will name seven, all which God removes and takes away when he effectually reveals his mind to man. First, the eare of man is stoppt with ignorance, that's a thick vaille or covering upon the eare, and keeps out the mind of God till it be removed. And, Secondly, Unbelief is another ear-stopper ; till the Lord removeth that we cannot hear. Thirdly, Impenitency or hardnesse of heart stopps the eare, there are a number of Scriptures I might give for each of these. Fourthly, the love of any particular sin is an eare-shutter or an eare-stopper, and the Lord removes that, when he opens the eare. Fifthly, Prejudices stop the eare, prejudices sometimes against the person speaking, sometime against the word spoken. That man will never hear a word to purpose, who hath a prejudice against the person, or a prejudice against the word, either a prejudice against the man, or against the matter. Sixthly, Pride stopps the eare too, the proud man will not hearken, therefore God humbles and brings down the spirit that the word may be heard. Seventhly, and lastly, the World is a great ear-stopper, that locks up the eare against the word ; the world in the profits of it, and the world in the pleasures of it, and the world in the cares of it, and the world in the fears of it, the world by or in every one of these stopps the eare, and by these the eares of all men naturally are stoppt, so that they are as it is said (*Psal. 58.4.*) *like the deafe adder, that stops her eare, and will not hear the voyce of the charmer, charme he never so wisely.*

aliquid in illorum aures insusurrare vellet deducebat desucentes capillos et in aptas aures tacto murmure aliquid instillabat. Sancti. Cini hinc aurem vellit et admonuit, &c. Horat.

Loquitur et audire facit.

Aurem revelare vel aperire est insinuare aliquid auribus animisq; quod inimicis sensibus reponendum sit. Clavorem et penetrantorem insinuationem voluntatis divinæ denotat. Coc:

Till all these stoppers are removed, and the eare opened, there is no receiving of the word.

Secondly Observe.

God is able to open and unlock the eare of man.

Though it hath never so many stopples in it, he can pull them out, never so many locks upon it, though all the seven spoken of, and seven more obstruct the ear, yet he can open them all, and make a free and uncontroulable passage for his word into the remotest and closest chambers of the soul. God can speak loud enough, not only to make the deafe, but the dead hear his voyce. *Verily, verily I say unto you* (saith Christ, *Joh. 5. 25.*) *the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voyce of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live.* By the dead he means not those who are corporally, but spiritually dead, that is, dead in sins and trespasses, and in danger of eternall death for their sins and trespasses, even these heard the voyce of the Son of God then speaking personally, and heard it afterwards ministerially, in the dispensation of the Gospell, and that voyce revived them; not only by giving them the comfort of that naturall life which they had before, but by bringing in a new spirituall life which before they had not. Then the internall eare is opened to purpose when those internall or mystically darke graves of sin are opened, and the soul comes forth into the light of life.

Yet more distinctly. God may be said to uncover or open the eares of men; when he doth these four things.

First, When he makes us not only to heare but to attend, not only to heare but to hearken; or not only to heare but to give eare. *Many give the word of God the hearing, but they doe not give eare to the word of God.*

Secondly, God opens the ear when he makes us not only attend, but understand, or when he takes the vaile off from our minds. The Apostle saith of the *Jewes* (2 Cor. 3. 14.) *The vaile remaineth upon them untaken away to this day in the reading of the old Testament* (and it doth so still) so that as they could not, so yet they cannot, *Looke to the end of that which is abolished*; that is, to Christ, who was the end or scope at which the whole Ceremoniall Law (now abolished) did then ayme. When once the eare is divinely opened, then the vaile of ignorance and spirituall blindness.

ness is taken off from the mind, both as to that greatest truth, and all other necessary truths. The opened eare is an understanding eare.

Thirdly, God openeth the eare when he causeth us to believe what we perceive and understand. As faith sets the whole soule aworke for God, so faith is the great worke of God upon the soule. When the eare is opened, truth is not only knowne, but savingly believed.

Fourthly, This opening of the eare maketh the soule obedient; Jesus Christ in that great prophecy of him (*Psal. 40. 6.*) to shew his ready obedience to his fathers command, saith, *Mine eare hast thou opened* (or digged) The eare of Christ was never shut in the least, either through ignorance or unbelieve; but he is sayd to have his eare opened, only to shew his constant preparedness and readiness for obedience. He came into the world with an open eare to all the will of God; and therefore it followeth in the 7th and 8th verses of that Psalm, *Then said I, loe I come, in the volume of thy booke it is written of me, I delight to doe thy will, O my God, yea thy law is within my heart.* Christ is brought in by another Prophet speaking to the same poynt with some little variety, but with very great significancy of expression (*Isa. 50. 4, 5.*) *He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine eare to heare as the learned;* we usually say, Sleep is in the eye, yet this prophecy intimates a sleep in the eare, *thou hast wakened mine eare.* What we are to understand by this wakened eare, is cleare in the next words of the same prophecy, *The Lord hath opened mine eare,* that's the word of *Eliphaz*, and the consequence of opening the eare, set downe in the Prophet, is the same now given in this poynt, *The Lord hath opened mine eare, and I was not rebellious.* He doth not say, *The Lord opened mine eare, and I heard,* but, *I was not rebellious;* that is, I gave up my selfe to obey the word or command, which I heard. The same Prophet (*Isa. 48. 8.*) describing the rebellion of the *Jewes*, puts this as the reason of it, *Yea thou heardest not,* (that is, thou didst not attend) *yea thou knewest not,* that is, thou didst not understand, *yea thine eare was not opened;* as if he had sayd, thine unopened eare was the cause why thou diddest neither attend, nor understand, nor obey the word spoken to thee. So much of the first gracious designe of God in speaking to men by dreams

and visions of the night ; *Then he openeth the ears of men.* The second is given in the latter part of the verse.

And scaleth their Instruction.

□ *signavit* The word signifies not only to *seale*, but to *perfect* or *conclude*.
obsignavit ; *He scaleth Instruction.*
confirmavit
perfect.

There is a threefold use of seales and sealing ; First, to distinguish one thing from another ; Secondly, to keep things safe and secret ; Thirdly, sealing is to confirme and ratifie ; A Bond, Deed, or Evidence in writing, till it hath a Seale, is but a scrip of paper of no force, but when once the Seale is put to it, then it is confirmed, then there is strength and force in it. A seale fortifies the writing, or maketh it authentick. *He scaleth their*

Instruction.

רדב *aradice* The word here used signifies both correction and Instruction,
רד *vincivit* and so it is rendred by some here, *He openeth their cares, or scaleth their chastisement.* Mr Broughton takes that sense, *And im-*
ligavit. per me- *printeth why they are chastised ;* that is, (as himselfe expounds it)
zaphoram casti- when he hath chastised them, he scaleth up the decree of their
gavit erudit, judgement ; or as another, He proposeth it unto them as firme
corripuit ver- and concluded, if they doe not repent and imprinteth in their
bis aut verbe- mind the certainty of it, as also the true cause of it. We render
ribus. fully to the sense of the word and scope of the text, *He scaleth*

Discipline eo- *their instruction ;* that is, upon the opening of the eare there is a
rum velut in- sealing or a setting home the word which is received. When the
presso sigillo eare is opened to receive ; God will make men hold what they
consignat. have received. The sealing of instruction, signifies the efficacy,
 Tygur: energy, or effectuall working of God with the word, he ratifies

Phrasis obfig- and confirms it to the soule, he maketh his word as sure to them
nandi eruditio- as a sealed Bond, both with respect to the duty commanded, and
nem, denotat the mercy promised. And, indeed, we have as much need to have
efficaciter cru- Instruction sealed, as to have the eare opened ; for 'tis possible
dire sc: ut non the eare may be opened, we may heare and understand, and in
concedatur ei some sense believe, yea obey, and yet not have the instruction
qui eruditur sealed. The instruction is then sealed, when we keepe what is re-
non attendere ceived, as the eare is opened when we receive what is offered.
et vim erudit- Unless the instruction be sealed, we heare and obey only for the
on non senti- present, not for the time to come, that is, we doe not retaine
re. Cog: and

and hide the word received for use and practise.

Now, whether we take this sealing in reference either to correction or instruction, it yeelds us matter of profitable meditation. First, As it refers to correction.

Note.

God assureth sinfull man that he shall smart for it, unlesse he hearken and obey.

It is as sure that he shall, as if he saw it under hand and seale; or as if the sentence were engraven upon his conscience, and fixt before his eyes. If the eare be not obedient to instruction, the back must submit to correction; *If the word will not doe it, the rod must; if teaching will not serve the turne, chastning shall; He sealeth their correction.* Every correction threatned is not certainly inflicted; for *Elihu* saith afterward (v. 26.) *He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable to him;* but the meaning is, mans correction is sealed in case he proceeds on in his sin; if he does not give proof that his eare is opened by his obedience to instruction, there is no escaping correction. The correction of the dearest children of God is sealed, if they heare and doe not. God will not cocker his stubborne children, nor spoyle them by sparing the rod; He will certainly meet with them one time or other, either by sicknesse, or poverty, or reproach; the order the war- rant is sealed for their correction.

We may much more apply this to the wicked, to the ungodly and rebellious, who though they have their outward eares open, yet their hearts remain shut; If the correction of the godly be sealed in that case, to be sure, the destruction of the wicked is; they are sealed for death, yea they are sealed for hell; the writ of their eternall Judgement is sealed. *If Judgement must begin at the house of God, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appeare? what shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God?*

Further, Take it as we render it, referring to instruction; *He sealeth their instruction.*

Whence note.

God is able to set home his instructions effectually upon the soule.

He can leave such an impression upon the heart, as shall never be forgotten nor worne out. He can make every word stick;

And

And so this is but a further illustration of what was said before ; he openeth their ears to receive the word, and then sealeth instruction upon them. The Apostle speaking of some persons converted, who were the fruit of his ministry, saith, *Ye are the seal of mine Apostleship* (1 Cor: 9. 2, 3.) that is, ye confirme and ratifie my ministry, that it is of God, and that God is in it. Now as the conversion of sinners, and the building up of Saints, is the seale of our ministry ; so the sealing of instruction upon the soule, is the conversion of sinners, and the edification of Saints. When a sinner is converted, his instruction is sealed upon him, and when a Saint is built up and edified, and increaseth in the things of God, then instruction is sealed upon him also. And untill we thus profit by the word, we have the word, as I may say, without a seale, nothing fastens upon us.

Thus much of the first designe of God in sending dreams and visions in those times, it was to open the ears of men, and to seale their Instruction ; This being only a generall benefit aymed at by those meanes, we have those which are more speciall set downe in the words which follow.

Vers. 17. *That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man.*

This 17th verse contains two of those blessed ends or designes of God in revealing himselfe to man by dreams and visions, or by visions in a dream, of which *Elihu* spake in the two former verses ; as then he takes an opportunity to open the ears of men, and seale their Instruction, to fasten and fix his word upon them, to make it stick and stay by them ; so in all this his purpose is ;

That he may withdraw man from his purpose.

הסיר *auferre*
erit, vel muta-
re in melius.

The word rendred to *withdraw*, signifies, to take off, or put away, to remove or change for the better. (*Isa: 1. 16.*) *Put away the evill of your doings* ; that is, doe no more evill, or (as the Lord speakes by another Prophet, (*Jer: 44. 4.*) *O doe not this abominable thing that I hate* ; we render the word in the other sense (*Job 27. 2.*) *He hath removed my Judgement farre from me.* There is in man a kind of settledness and resolvedness upon his

his purpose, he will on ; but saith *Elihu*, the Lord withdrawes him, he stretcheth forth his hand, and pul's him back ; *He withdraweth*

Man.

Adam, the earthly man ; The proper name of the first man, is the common name of all men. Man is earthly by nature, and so are all his naturall purposes. To draw an earthly man from that which is earthly, is no easie matter ; only the power of God can doe it, *He withdraweth man*

From his purpose.

The word which we render *purpose*, properly signifies a *worke* ; and so it is translated not only elsewhere, but here by severall Interpreters. Mr. *Broughton* is expresse, *That the earthly man leave off to work*, and then by *work*, he means an *evill work*, as by purpose an *evill purpose*. The word *work* set alone usually signifies an *evill work*, as the word *wife* put alone is taken for a good wife (*Prov. 8. 22.*) *He that findeth a wife, findeth good* ; every one that findeth a wife doth not find good, (there are many bad wives) only he that findeth a good wife findeth good. So on the contrary, the word *worke* standing here alone implyeth a bad work. And to withdraw man from his work, or from his purpose, is to withdraw him from his *evill work* or purpose : The Septuagint gives it clearly so, *that he may withdraw man from unrighteousnesse*. And Mr. *Broughton* glossing his own translation, saith, *that he leave off mans work, and do the work of God.*

מעשה
השם fecit.

Ut a moribus
homo opus, sc:
suum et animum
malum. Iun:
Sapientia de
Sapientia de
Sapientia. Sept:

Againe, This terme *work*, seemes opposed to the thought or concupiscence of the inner man ; *he withdraweth man from his work*, that his hand may not effect what his heart hath contrived : that the bitter root may not bring forth *evill* and bitter fruit. Or if we follow our translation, the sense will be the same ; *He withdraweth man from his purpose*, that is, he checks and stops the inward motions and workings of mans heart, and so keeps him from bringing it to perfection by an outward *evill work*. (*Jam. 1. 15.*) *Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, brings forth death* ; God in great mercy takes man off from his purpose when he finds him upon an *evill device* or purpose ; he crusheth the Cockatrice's egge that it may not be hatched,

ed, and destroyeth the conception of those Babylonish brats that they may never come to the birth: (*Mic. 2. 1.*) *Woe to them that devise mischief on their beds, when the morning is light they practise it, because it is in the power of their hand.* The work begins at the heart, there 'tis plotted and contrived; *the heart is the workhouse of sin*; now the Lord withdraws man from his purpose, and will not suffer the inward work to be accomplished by the outward work.

Ut avertat hominem ab iis quæ fecit. Vulg.

Further, we may refer these words either to what is past, or to what is to come; some translate (referring it to what is past) *that he may turn, or withdraw man from those things which he hath done*; that is, from those evils to which he hath already set his hand; this is done by giving man repentance, which is our being humbled for, and turning away from any evill already committed.

Our translation refers it to what is intended to be done, for that's a purpose. So the meaning is, God doth these things that he may keep man from doing that evill or mischief which he hath resolved upon, or at least is forming and hammering in his thoughts. *Abimelech* had an evill purpose for the matter (though possibly the purpose of his heart was not evill, for he said to God (and God said he spake true) *in the integrity of my heart, and innocency of my hands have I done this*, Gen. 20. 5, 6. (he was I say about an evill purpose for the matter) when he thought to take *Abrams* wife from him, but the Lord came to him in a dream, and withdrew him from the evill of his purpose. *Laban* intended evill, or hard dealing to *Jacob*, but the Lord met him also in a dreame, and withdrew him from his purpose, saying, (*Gen. 31. 24.*) *Take heed thou speak not to Jacob, neither good nor bad*, that is, hinder him not in his journey, either by threatnings or by promises. Thus man is taken off or withdrawn from evill purposes by preventing grace; and from evill workes by repenting grace.

I shall prosecute the words according to our reading only, which imports that when man hath some evill purpose upon his heart, the Lord visits him in dreames and visions of the night, to withdraw him from that purpose.

Hence observe First,

Man is very forward and eager upon evill purposes.

God himself must come to withdraw and fetch him off; or o-
ther-

therwise he will be driving them on. The heart of man naturally hath no other purposes but evill purposes, and upon them it is set (as I may say) to purpose; that is, he will effect and bring them about if he can. When *Moses* reprov'd *Aaron* concerning the golden Calfe which he had made, at the instance and violent importunity of the people, *Aaron* answered for himself (*Exod. 32. 23.*) *Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot, thou knowest the people that they are set on mischief*, they are bent to it, they have such a mind to it, that there's no turning them from it; they will hear no reason nor take any denyall, when the fit is on them. There is a setting of the heart of man continually upon evill; the wind blowes that way, and no other way, the wind sits alwayes in that bad corner till God turneth it. There are two gracious acts of God, spoken of in Scripture, which doe exceedingly shew forth the sinfullnesse of man; every act of grace doth in its measure aggravate the sinfullnesse of man, and alwayes the higher grace acteth, the more is the sinfullnesse of man discovered, especially (I say) in this twofold act of grace. The former whereof consists in *drawing*; the latter in *withdrawing*; there is a gracious act of God in drawing the sinfull sons and daughters of men to that which is good. Man is drawne, First, into a state of grace or goodnesse, by this he is made good. He is drawn, Secondly, to acts of grace or goodnesse, by this he doth good. Of the former Christ speaks (*Joh. 6. 44.*) *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him*, that is, no man can beleieve, (for by faith we come to Christ) except he receive power from on high. God draweth the soul to Christ, and that's a powerfull act of divine drawing, though not a compulſory act: and as God must draw man into a state of grace, which is our union with Christ by the Spirit in beleiving, so he draweth him to the acting of his graces. Of this latter the Church speaketh to Christ (*Cant. 1. 4.*) *Draw me, and I will run after thee*. These gracious drawings shew that we are not only utterly unable, but averſe to the receiving grace, and so becoming good, while we are in a state of nature; as also that we are very backward to doe that which is good, even when we are in a state of grace. Now as God acts very graciously in drawing man to good, so Secondly, in withdrawing him from evill, from those evill purposes and evill practises, to which all men are so easily yet so strongly carried. The Prophet (*Jer. 2.*

23, 24.) elegantly describes the exceeding forwardnesse of that people to evill, while he compareth them to *the swift Dromodary, traversing her wayes, and to the wild Asse in the Wildernesse that snuffeth up the wind at her pleasure (or the desire of her heart) in her occasion who can turn her away?* As the wild Asse set upon her pleasure, & in her occasion, when she hath a mind to it, will not be turn'd away; such is the heart of man. That other Prophet (*Isa. 5. 18.*) telleth us of those *who draw iniquity with cords of vanity, and sin as it were with a cart rope*; that is, they set themselves with all their might to doe mischief. When men are thus vainly bent upon vanity, 'tis a mighty work of God to withdraw them from their work. When, what men are purposed to doe they are fastened to it as with cords and cart-ropes, what but the power of the great God can withdraw them from it?

Whence note Secondly,
Unlesse God did withdraw and fetch us off from sin, we should run on in it continually.

When man is in an evill way, he hath no mind to returne till God turneth him; let come on't what will he will venture: 'Tis only through grace that the heart either abstains or returns from evill. David saith (*Psal. 18. 23.*) *I have kept my self from mine iniquity.* David kept himself from his iniquity, yet he was not his own keeper: It was by the power of God that he kept himself from that sin to which he was most prone, even from that sin to which his own corruptions and the Devills temptations were alwayes drawing him. David had some speciall iniquity to which his heart was inclin'd more then any other, and from that he kept himself, being himself kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation. Of our selves we can neither keep our selves from doing iniquity, nor leave off doing that iniquity, which we have once done. How can man withhold himself from sin, while sin hath so great a hold of him, yea the Mastery over him?

Thirdly Note.

God is graciously pleased both to withdraw man from doing evill and to draw him to repentance when he hath done evill.

Between these two the grace of God is daily working in and towards man, and it worketh for the effecting of both many wayes.

First,

First, by his word, and that in a fourfold consideration. First, by the word of his command, he every where in Scripture forbids man to doe any evill, and bids him repent of every evill which he doth. Secondly, by the word of his threatnings; they are as thunderbolts to deterre him. Thirdly, by the word of his promises, they are divine allurements, sweetly yet effectually to entice him. Fourthly, by the word of his perswasions, they are full of taking arguments to convince and win him.

Secondly, God withdrawes man from sin, and drawes him to repentance when he hath sinned, *by his works*: First, by his works of Judgment, they break him to these duties. Secondly, by his works of mercy, they melt him into these duties.

Thirdly, God withdraws man from sin and drawes him to repentance by his patience and long-suffering. (Rom. 2.4.) *Despiseest thou the riches of his goodnesse, and forbearance, and long-suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth them to repentance.* As if the Apostle had said, O man, if thou knowest not the meaning of Gods patience towards thee, and that this is the meaning of it, thou knowest nothing of the mind and meaning of God towards thee.

Fourthly, The Lord withdraweth man from evill purposes by seasonable counsell. *David* was going on in a very bad purpose (1 Sam. 25.) and God stirred up *Abigail* to meete him, and by good counsell to withdraw him from his purpose: This *David* acknowledged (vers. 32, 33.) *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me.* As if he had said, *I was* fully purposed to revenge my self upon *Naball*, and had not surely left a man of his house alive by the morning light, if thou hadst not met me; therefore blessed be God who hath sent thee, and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and hast by thy good counsell withdrawne me from that evill purpose.

Lastly, consider God withdraweth man from his sinfull purpose, all or any of these wayes, by putting forth his mighty power with them. For his word alone, his works alone, his patience alone, the counsell of man alone would not doe it, if God did not stretch forth his own arme in and with these meanes for the doing of it. Nothing is any further efficacious then as God is with it. (Numb. 22.) *Balaam* was going on in his wicked purpose, being sent for by

by *Balak* to curse the people of God : And though the Lord sent his Angell to be an adversary to him in his way (*vers. 22.*) so that his Asse turned out of the way into the field, yet *Balaam* went on in his purpose, yea though the Angell standing between two walls caused his Asse to turne so suddenly, that the crueltie *Balaams* foot against the wall (*vers. 25.*) yet *Balaam* went on in his purpose : Once more though the Angell went further and stood in a narrow way, where there was no way to turne to the right hand nor to the left, so that the poor Asse fell down under him (*v. 27.*) and speaking (as the Apostle *Peter* expresseth it, *2 Epist. 2.*) with mans voyce rebuked the madnesse of the Prophet; Yet so mad he was that all these checks and warnings, could not withdraw him from his purpose. And what the Lord did at that time to *Balaam* by an Angell, that he doth by some other means and providences to stop many from their evill purposes, who yet will not be stopt. He speaks to them in the ministry of his word, he speaks to them in his works; he spreads their way with roses, he hedgeth up their way with thorns, he bestoweth sweet mercies upon them, he sends sharp afflictions upon them, to withdraw them from their evill projects and purposes, yet on they goe like *Balaam*, unlesse he send more then an Angell, even his holy Spirit to withdraw them.

Lastly, *Elisha* reports it as a speciall favour of God to withdraw man from his purpose.

Whence note.

It is a great mercy to be hinder'd in sinfull purposes and intendments.

Disappointments are acts of grace, when we are acting against grace; If God stop us from doing evill, not onely by his word, but by blowes, or by a hedge of thorns, yea if he stop us by a drawn sword, it is a great mercy. Though God throw us to the ground (as he did *Saul*, afterwards *Paul*, when he went with a bloody purpose to vex and persecute the Saints (*Acts 9.*) let us count our selves exalted, and rejoyce in it more then in any worldly exaltation. 'Tis a rich mercy to be kept from executing an evill purpose, though by our owne poverty and outward misery. The doing of that which is sinfull, is worse then any thing that can be done to us, or endured by us, as a stop against sin. Sin

bath

hath death in it ; sin hath wrath in it ; sin hath hell in it ; sin hath Devill and all in it ; therefore to be kept from sin, let it be by what means it will, if by paines and pining sicknesse, if by reproaches and disgraces, yea if by death, we have cause to blesse God. The greatest and forest Judgement which God powres upon sinfull men, is to let them alone in or not to withdraw them from their sins. To be suffered to goe on and prosper in sin, is the worst of sufferings, the last of Judgements, the next Judgement to hell it selfe, and an infallible signe of an heire of hell. Thus the wrath of God waxed hot against *Israel when he gave them up to their owne hearts lusts, and they walked in their owne Councel* (Psal: 81. 11.) This was the highest revenge that God could take upon that sinfull people. He sayd a little before, *Israel would none of me* ; when God wooed them they were so coy, they would have none of him ; and then, said he, goe on, take your fill of sin ; I give you up to your owne hearts lusts. The Lord did not say, I gave them up to the sword, to the famine, or to the pestilence, but to their owne hearts lusts, and to walke on in their own way ; *That person or people may be sure, God hath purposed evil against them, whom he will not withdraw from their evil purposes.* The severity of the wrath of God against the Gentiles is exprest and summ'd up in this (*Rom: 1. 26, 28.*) *He gave them up to vile affections ; he gave them up to a reprobate mind, to doe things which were not convenient. A naturall man left to himselfe, will soone doe such things as nature it selfe abhorreth and blusheth at.* The same dreadfull doome is denounced (*Rev: 22. 11.*) *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still.* I will not withdraw him from his way ; let him goe on and perish, let him goe on and sink downe to the pit of perdition for ever. As *St John* in the *Revelation* foretelling the Church, given up or left to (not in) great sufferings of all sorts ; *Here is the patience of the Saints.* So when we see the world given up and left in great sinnings of any sort, especially if to sinnings of all sorts, we may truly and sadly say, *Here is the wrath of God.* 'Tis therefore a great mercy, if God will any way withdraw man from his sinfull wayes and purposes ; especially when he taketh such gentle wayes, as dreams and visions, counsels and instructions, to withdraw man from his purpose, and (as it followeth in this verse) to

And the originall word here used to signifie the man from whom God hideth pride, hath a neere cognation to this notion about hiding pride it selfe. Man is twice exprest in this verse, yet not by the same word ; The first yword notes man in the weaknesse of his constitution, *an earthly man* ; This second notes man in the powerfulness of his condition, *a strong man*, a mighty man, an eminent man, a man with all his furniture, in the fullness of his earthly glory and greatness ; when man hath much naturall power, much civill power, with the various additions and ornaments of both these powers upon him, then man is in greatest danger to be proud, & then God *hideth pride from man*. And who can hide pride from such a man but God alone. Men commonly blow up such men with pride by great applauses, and such men have mostly great thoughts and high apprehensions of themselves, and are very forward to discover (which is the greatest discovery of their weaknes) their owne pride. *God only hideth pride from man* ; that is, he makes it not to be, as well as hinders its appearing ; that which is hidden is as if it were not. The word is used in that sense (*Job 3. 10.*) *Because he did not hide sorrow from mine eyes* ; Sorrow is hidden from us when the matter of sorrow is so taken away, that we sorrow not at all. To hide pride is to take away the matter and occasion, the incentives and motives of pride, whatsoever is a nurse of pride, or doth encourage the pride of our hearts, that's to *hide pride from man*.

Againe, We may take this word, *pride*, in a large sense, as Comprehending all sin, *He withdraweth man from his purpose, and hideth pride* ; that is, sin of all sorts *from man* ; and doubtlesse there is pride of one kinde or other in every act of sin ; There is a heightening of the spirit against God, some dissatisfaction with the mind and will of God, and thence a setting up of our will against the will of God in every sinner, especially in bold and wilfull sinners. Such sinners would not let the will of God stand, but desire that their own may. This is pride ; This in some degree is mingled with every sin, and pride leads to all sin ; therefore in Scripture sometimes an humble or meek man is oppos'd, not only to a proud man in speciall, but to a wicked man in generall (*Psal. 147. 6.*) *The Lord lifteth up the meek, he casteth the wicked down to the ground*. Where the *wicked* man in the latter part of the verse, stands in opposition to the *meek* or humble

ble man in the former part of it. Nor can it be denyed, but that as pride is in it ſelfe a very great wickedneſſe, ſo it gives a propenſion and fitteſſe for the doing of all manner of wickedneſſe. And thus take it in the largeſt ſenſe, 'tis a truth that God hideth pride, that is, every ſin from man, otherwiſe he would ſoone ſhew forth any ſin as much as pride. But I rather keep to that ſtrictneſſe of Interpretation here, as pride is oppoſ'd to humilitie, which is not only a choyce grace, but the ornament of all thoſe graces which are hidden in the heart, and held out in the life of a gracious man. And thus the Lord by exerciſing man with dreams and viſions in his affliction, doth firſt ſtop and check the very purpoſes of evill, that they come not to act, and when man hath brought to paſſe or acted any good purpoſe, he keeps him from oſtentation. *He hideth pride from man.*

It being the Lords deſigne to hide pride from man, by thoſe fore-named diſpenſations.

Obſerve, Firſt.

Man is naturally much diſpoſed and very prone to pride.

Thoſe things which Children are apt to abuſe or hurt themſelves with, their parents hide from them; They will hide edge-tooles from them, leſt they get a wound by medling with them; They will hide fruit from them, leſt by eating overmuch they get a ſurſet. Thus the Lord our tender father often hides all the means and occasions of pride from the eyes of his children, becauſe they are ſo ready to boaſt and liſt up themſelves in pride. *Man* (as was ſhewed at the 13th verſe of the former Chapter) *is a proud piece of fleſh, and hath much proud fleſh in him.* The Prophet ſaith (Ezek: 7. 10.) *Pride hath budded;* pride hath a roote, and it brings forth fruit. There is a two-fold pride, or pride of two ſorts. Firſt, ſecret unſeene pride, or pride of heart; Secondly, open viſible pride, or pride of life. In alluſion to the Prophets metaphor, we may ſay, there is pride in the bud, and pride in the roote, pride buddeth outwardly.

Firſt, At the tongue, men ſpeak proud words, they ſpeak boaiſt-ingly and vaine-gloriouſly (Pſal: 75. 5.) *Speak not with a ſtiff-neck,* that is, ſpeak not proudly. Pride budded at the tongue of *Nebuchadnezzar* (Dan: 4. 30.) when he walked in his Pallace and ſaid, *Is not this great Babel that I have built for the houſe of*
the

the kingdome, by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty. Here was pride budding at the tongue.

Secondly, Pride buddeth also at the eye, in scornfull lofty looks. *David* professeth that *his heart was not haughty, nor his eyes lofty* (*Psal: 131. 1.*) The haughtinels of many mens hearts may be seene at those windowes of the body, the eyes, in lofty looks. These are threatned with a downfall (*Psal: 18. 27.*) *The Lord will bring downe high lookes, that is, proud men who looke highly.* And againe (*Isa: 2. 11.*) *The lofty lookes of man shall be humbled, and the haughtines of man shall be bowed downe.* Once more saith the Lord (*Isa: 10. 13.*) *I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Asyria, and the glory of his high lookes.* There we have pride in the roote, a stout heart, and pride in the fruit, high lookes. (*Isa: 3. 11.*) *The skew of their Countenance testifieth against them; that is, they look proudly, though (which should lay them in the dust) they live very lewdly, yea they are proud of their lewdness.*

Thirdly, How often doth pride bud in apparell, in vaine fashions, and new-fangled attires, in the affected adornings and trimmings of a body of clay? What are these but the buddings of pride? yea the flaggs and banners of pride. Some are as proud of their gay dresses, as the Peacock of his feathers. We commonly say, *Fine feathers make fine birds*, but how foolish are thote birds that are proud of Feathers!

Secondly, There is pride of heart, or pride budding in the spirit of man, which doth not shew it selfe; only the mind swells within. When men have high thoughts of themselves (though they doe not (as the Apostle *Jude* hath it) speake great swelling words of vanity, yet they have great swelling thoughts of vanity, then pride buddeth in their spirits, their minds swell, and the mind will swell more then the tongue. The tongue swells mightily, but the heart much more. The spirit of a man may lift up it selfe on high, when the man looks very demurely. (*Hab: 2. 4.*) *Behold, his soule which is lifted up, is not upright in him; If the soule be lifted up, the man falls; He that is high-minded, cannot be upright in his minde.*

It may be questioned, Whence it cometh to passe, that the soule of man is so much and so often lifted up with pride? What causeth this swelling and heaving of his spirit? I answer,

First, Some are proud of their birth, either, that they are borne of great men, or that they are borne of good men. The Baptist admonished the *Jewes* of this piece of pride (*Math: 3. 19.*) *Thinke not to say within your selves, we have Abraham to our father.* As if he had sayd, I well perceive what makes you (as we speake proverbially) stand so much upon your pantaloos? and talk within your selves, at such a rate of your selves, is it not because you are of *Abrahams* stock? But I say unto you, let not your heart swell with these thoughts, *we are Children of Abraham; for God is able even of these stones to raise up children to Abraham;* that is, God will not want a people, though he should lay you aside, and entertaine you no longer for his people.

Secondly, Others are proud of riches, yea they *boast of the multitude of their riches* (*Psal: 49. 6.*) Even they who desire to hide their riches as much as they can, yet cannot but tell the world they are proud of their riches, so proud, that they slight and contemne all men that have not as much riches as they; O what rejoycings have most rich men over their riches? *Hezekiah* a great King and a Good man (a rare conjunction) had much of that upon his spirit (*Isa: 39. 2.*) when Ambassadors came from *Babylon*, *He was glad of them, and shewed them all his treasure;* He affected they should see what a rich King he was, and what masses of Gold and silver as well as what multitudes of men were at his command.

Thirdly, Many are proud of their honours and powers in the world; They are high-minded, because they are set in high places; 'Tis a dishonour to some great men that they have not truly great spirits. And 'tis the temptation of all great men to have proud spirits.

Fourthly, Not a few are proud of their bodily perfections and strength; many a soule is defiled and deformed with pride by the bodies beauty and fairenesse; many look not after the beauty of holinesse, while they doat upon the beauty of their owne comelinesse; they see themselves in their beauty, till they are proud of it, and care not (which should be our greatest care, and shall be our greatest priviledge, *Isa: 33. 17.*) *to see the King in his beauty.* As some trust in their spirituall beauty (*Ezek: 16. 15.*) so others over-weene their corporall, both are the effects of pride; and the first is by so much the worse of the two, by how much it riseth from a better object. Fifthly,

Fifthly, Many are proud of their naturall parts, proud of their gifts, proud of their wit, proud of their memory, proud of their eloquence and abilities of speaking. As *knowledge it selfe puffeth up* (1 Cor: 8. 1.) so doe all those endowments which serve either for the getting or expressing of our knowledge. Gifts and abilities, whether naturall or improved and acquired, doe not more fit us for service, then tempt us to and (unlesse grace worke mightily) taint us with pride.

Sixthly, As many are proud of what they have, so others are proud of what they have done, they are proud of their actions, their spirits swell with the thoughts of their owne workes. Some are so wicked, that they are proud of their evill workes. The Apostle saith, *They glory in their shame* (Phil: 3. 19.) *David* complain'd of many (*Psal: 4.*) who *turned his glory into shame*; but these turne their shame into glory, that is, they are proud of that for which they ought to be ashamed. Now if some are proud of the evill, of the mischief which they have done, how easily may we grow proud of the good which we have done? proud of our duties, proud of our righteous deeds, proud of our charitable deeds to men, proud of our prayers to God, proud of our zeale for God, as *Jehu* was who sayd, *Come and see my zeale for the Lord*. The heart of a good man may soone have too-much to doe with what he hath done, his thoughts may quickly worke too much towards and upon his owne workes. But as for hypocrites and selfe-seekers, who doe good to be seene of men, they cannot forbear seeing it themselves, and surely that sight of the eye cannot but affect the heart with pride.

Seventhly, Pride riseth often from the successe of what is attempted and done, men are proud of victories. The *Assyrian* is described (*Isa: 10. 13, 14.*) triumphing and insulting, because *he had put downe the nations as a valiant man*. And (*Hab: 1. 16.*) we have the *Chaldeans* *sacrificing to their net, and burning incense to their drage, because by them their portion is fat, and their meat plenteous*; that is, they boasted of and gloried in their great achievements in warre; so it seemes to be explained in the next words (*v. 17.*) *Shall they therefore empty their net, and not spare continually to slay the nations?*

Eighthly, Pride springeth out of the very mercies and salvation of God. Thus 'tis sayd of *Hezekiah* (2 Chron: 32. 25.) after

after he had received two great mercies ; First, deliverance from a great enemy ; and, Secondly, from a great sicknesse ; *He rendred not againe according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up.* How lifted up ? not in thankfulness, for he rendred not according to the kindness, but in pride and high-mindednesse ; for presently it is said (v. 26.) *Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himselfe for the pride of his heart.*

Ninthly, The heart is lifted up and waxeth proud with Church-Priviledges ; Some say, they are in the Church, or they are the Church ; they enjoy pure ordinances and administrations of holy worship above others. For this kind of pride the Prophet reprov'd the *Jewes* (Jer. 7. 3, 4.) *Heare ye the word of the Lord, all ye of Judah, that enter in at these gates to worship the Lord, &c. Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are we ; The temple of the Lord are these ;* As if he had sayd, Be not proud of the Temple (what we trust to, besides God, we are proud of) nor of your Temple priviledges, you will find no sanctuary, no security there, unlesse you amend your wayes ; these things will doe you no good, except you be better. The *Jewes* were taxed also by the Apostle for such a proud cry (Rom. 2. 17.) *Thou makest thy boast of God ;* and can a man doe better then to boast of God ? but they swell'd with pride, they did not rejoyce with thankfulness, they contemn'd others, as if God were a God to them only, and saw somewhat in them above others, as the reason why he chose them for his people above others. This was pride of spirit, or spirituall pride. And againe to the *Jew* (v. 22.) *Thou that makest thy boast of the Law ;* And is it not our duty to boast of the law or word of God ? But the Apostle saw them proud of the Law, not obedient to it ; He perceived their hearts were lifted up in their priviledge of having the letter of the Law, while both their hearts and lives were unconformed and unsubdued to the spirituallnesse of the Law.

Tenthly, Pride is ready to rise in the heart of man from that divine light & those extraordinary Revelations which he receives from God ; and it is hard to keep the heart under when God discovers very much of himselfe to man. This was *Pauls* case (2 Cor. 12. 7.) *Lest I should be lifted up above measure through the abundance of revelations, there was given me a thorne in the flesh,*

flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me. Even Paul in that case needed a thorne in his flesh to let out or prevent the Impostumation of his spirit. Some conceive the reason why the Prophet Ezekiel is so often called, *Son of Man*, was to keepe him humble, while he had many revelations from God.

Eleventhly, Some have been proud not only of divine and heavenly, but of diabolical and hellish Revelations. We read of one *Thendas* boasting himselfe to be *some body* (Acts 5. 36.) This vaine man pretended revelations from God, which were indeed from the Devill; And he swell'd with this conceit, boasted himselfe to be *some body*, that is, he thought himselfe to be *every body*; as if the perfections of all men were Center'd in him, or as if all others were *no body*, and he himselfe the only *some body*. The Apostle (Acts 8. 9.) speaking of *Symon*, who had used sorcery and bewitched the people of *Samarina*, saith, *He gave out that himselfe was some great one*; he swell'd with pride from his diabolical Revelations; giving out not only (as *Thendas*) that he was *some body*, but that he was *some great one*. Though indeed for a man to report himselfe *some body*, is (as both learned Grecians and Latines noted in the Margin tell us) to report himselfe a Great one. And who are greater in pride; then they who make Great reports of themselves, or report themselves great?

How great a proneness there is in the heart of man to pride, may appeare by all these instances; by which it appeares that as there is much pride abiding in man, so by all or any of these occasions it is dayly budding out, unlesse God hide it from man, and nip it in the bud.

Yet here it may be questioned; Whence it cometh to passe; that man is so prone to pride? or what is the spring of it?

I answer; First, Pride springs from Inordinate selfe-love, (2 Tim. 3. 2.) *Men shall be lovers of their own selves, Covetous, Boasters, Proud.* They that are undue lovers of themselves, or in love with themselves, they presently grow proud of themselves. Selfe-love, and selfe-flattery, are glasses in which if a man look upon himselfe, he appears double to what he is, or much greater then what he really is. Selfe-love is a multiplying, yea and a magnifying glasse. 'Tis dangerous to see our selves through our owne selfe-love; That sight of selfe affects the heart with high

high thoughts of selfe, which high thoughts the Lord would have all men cast downe, or cast away, while he gives that admonition by his Apostle to the *Romans* (*Rom: 12. 3.*) *Let no man thinke of himselfe more highly then he ought to thinke* (that is, let him not thinke highly of himselfe at all) but (as it followeth in the same verse) *Soberly, or to sobriety.* For indeed many are drunken, yea mad, or mad-drunke with high, that is, proud thoughts of themselves. Hence that of the same Apostle (*Gal: 6. 3.*) *If a man think himselfe to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himselfe*; he that thinks himselfe to be something, is he that hath proud thoughts of himselfe; and such a *something*, is a meere *nothing*, that is, is no such thing as he thinks himselfe to be; as is cleare in the case of the Church of *Laodicea* (*Rev: 3. 16.*) Hence

Secondly, Pride springs from an opinion that what we have is better then indeed it is; the proud man thinks all his silver gold, and his brasse silver. We speak proverbially of such, *All their geese are swans*; they alwayes over-rate their own commodities.

Thirdly, Pride springs from this false opinion, that what we have, we have it from our selves, or that 'tis of our own getting. The Apostles Pride-confounding question, is, (*1 Cor: 4. 7.*) *What hast thou that thou hast not received?* As if he had sayd, the true reason why men boast, or the ground of all their proud boasting is this, they think not themselves beholding to any for what they have; all is of themselves, or by a selfe-improvement; they have somewhat (they imagine) which they have not received.

Fourthly, The proud man thinks what he hath, he alone hath it; at least, that he hath it in a greater measure then any other. He is the Cedar, others are but shrubs. He is the Giant, others are but dwarfes. Only the humble attaine that rule (*Rom: 12. 10.*) *In honour preferring one another*: as also that (*Phil: 2. 3.*) *In lowliness of mind, let each esteeme other better then himselfe.*

Fifthly, Pride riseth from this thought, that what we have, we shall alwayes have. Holy David began to be blowne up with pride, as soone as ever he sayd in his prosperity, *I shall never be moved.* Babylon glorified her selfe, having sayd in her heart, *I sit a Queene, and am no widdow, and shall see no sorrow,* (*Revel: 18. 7.*)

Secondly,

Secondly, In that God is here sayd to *hide pride from man*;

Observe.

Pride is a very vile and most odious sin.

If God hide it from mans eyes, then surely God himselfe is of purer eyes then to behold it, and be pleased. (*Psal: 138. 6.*) *The Lord knoweth the proud as far off*; He that meets a spectacle or person which he cannot endure to look upon, avoydes it, or turnes from it while he is yet as far off; whereas if the object be delightfull, he draweth neer, and comes as close as he can; when therefore 'tis sayd, *the Lord knoweth a proud man as far off*, it shews his disdain of him, *He will scarce touch him with a paire of tongs*, (as we say) he cannot abide to come neere him. He knows well enough how vile he is even at the greatest distance. Pride is the first of those seven things which are an abomination to the Lord, (*Prov: 6. 17.*) And how abominable a thing pride is, may appeare further by these six Considerations.

First, The folly and Irrationallity of pride, renders it odious to God; nothing is more odious to a wise man then folly, how odious then is pride to the most wise God! When *Paul* did any thing which had but a shew of pride in it, though he did it only upon Constraint, yet he calls himselfe foole for doing it (*2 Cor: 12. 11.*) *I am become a foole in glorying, ye have compelled me.* Doth not this intimate, that in *Pauls* opinion, all proud self-glories and boasters are fooles, that is, such as act below common sense or reason. In the Hebrew language, the same word that signifies boasting and pride, signifies folly and foolishnesse. The empty vessell yeilds the greatest sound; and they that make so great a noise of themselves, are usually nothing else but a Great noyse themselves, at least they unavoydably rayse a suspicion of themselves, that they are but empty vessells, or shallow rivers. This was *Solomons* conclusion (*Pro: 25. 27.*) *For men to search their owne glory is no glory*; that is, a man obscures himselfe by self-glorying. How foolish, how irrationall a thing is it for any man to glory proudly, when as by doing so he obscures that which is the chiefeest glory of man as man, his reason; and seemes to put himselfe to the question, whether he be a reasonable creature yea or no.

Secondly, Pride is more abominable, because it is not only

the folly of man, but a robbery of God ; nothing robs God of his honour so much as pride. It is said of Jesus Christ (*Phil. 2. 6.*) *He thought it no robbery to be equall with God* ; He did not wrong God in making himselfe his equall, himselfe being God. But if men will match themselves with God, or are lifted up in their spirits, (as proud men are beyond the line of man) this is a robbery of God. Whatsoever we take to our selves more then is due, we take from God, yea we steale from God. They who forget God the author and fountaine of all they have, and take glory to themselves, commit the worst kind of robbery, and are the most dangerous Theeves. (*Isa. 42. 8.*) *My glory will I not give to another* ; therefore if any take glory to themselves (as I say againe) all proud men doe) 'tis stealing, and 'tis not only (as I may say) picking of his pocket, but the breaking open of his Treasury, of his Cabinet, to carry away the chief Jewel of his Crowne, so is *his glory* (*Rom. 11. 36.*) *All is from him, therefore all must be to him* ; all is from the father of light, therefore what light, what gifts, what strength soever we have, it must returne to him in prayses, and in the glorifying of his name ; we may not deck or adorne our own name with it, nor put our name upon it ? How much soever we have we have received, it is from the Lord ; therefore 'tis extreemly sinfull and sacrilegious to take or keepe it to our selves. And as whatsoever good we have we have it of God, so whatsoever good we have done, we have had light and strength from God to doe it ; naturall yea spirituall strength, not only the first power of acting, but all subsequent actions of that power are from God ; therefore to have secret listings up of spirit, in our owne actions, is to rob God (*Psal. 51. 15.*) *Open thou my lips, and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise*, sayd David ; As if he had sayd, Lord if thou wilt open my lips, and help me to speak as I ought, I will not shew forth my owne praise, nor boast of what I have either spoken or done, but I will shew forth thy praise ; because the opening of the lips is from thee.

Thirdly, It is an abomination to be proud ; for whatsoever any man hath done, or how good soever any man is, he is no better then he should be, and hath done no more then was his duty to doe ; he hath done but his duty to God, and his duty to man, when he hath done his best, he hath done no more ; every man is bound

bound to doe the good that he doeth, how much soever it be that he doeth; therefore it is both an ignoble and an abominable thing for any man to boast of what he hath done.

Fourthly, Is it abominable to boast of what we have done, seeing how much soever we have done, it will appeare upon a right and due account, that we have done lesse then we ought, and are much short of our duty, (*Luke 17. 10.*) *When ye shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, we are unprofitable servants, and have done but that which was our duty to doe.* We can doe nothing but what is our duty, but all we doe is not the one halfe of our whole duty, and shall we glory as if we had obliged God by doing more then all!

Fifthly, It is an odious thing for any man to be proud of what he hath done, for God might have done it by another if he pleased. No man is necessary to God, as if his worke could not be done unlesse such a one doe it. He hath choyce of instruments, and is able to fit those for his businesse who are most unfit of themselves. It is matter of thankfulness that God will call and use us to doe him any service, and enable us to doe it; God could have put his talent into another mans hand; the riches, the power, the wisdom, the learning, the parts which thou addest by, he could have put it into other hands; he can make the dumb to speak, as well as the greatest speaker; He can make an Ideot, a Dunce, knowing and learned, as well as the most knowing among the learned. Therefore the learned, the eloquent, have no reason to be proud, but much to be thankfull; He can make the weakest to doe as much as the strongest; therefore the strongest have no reason to be proud, but much to be thankfull; He can raise Children to *Abraham* out of the stones of the street; therefore the *Jewes* must not be proud, or thinke that God is beholding to them for being his people; *He can ordaine strength and his owne praise out of the mouthes of babes and sucklings* (*Psal: 8: 2. Math: 21. 16.*) therefore the wise and prudent have no reason to be proud, but much to be thankfull. O remember, It is of Gods vouchsafement not of our desert, that we are admitted to his service.

Lastly, Pride must needs be an odious thing, and that which God greatly abhorrs, because it quite crosseeth the designe of God in the Gospel; which is to keep the creature humble and

low, that he himselfe alone may be exalted ; *He will not beare it that any flesh should glory in his presence ; He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord* (1 Cor: 1. 29, 31.) God will have his end upon all flesh, and therefore he will dreadfully glorifie himselfe upon those, who proudly glory in themselves.

Further, The word by which man is expressed, from whom God hides pride signifying (as was shewed) *a strong mighty man*, the most accomplished and best furnished man.

Observe, Thirdly.

Great men, wise men, rich men, are very subject to and often carried away by pride.

God therefore hides pride from them, because they lie so open to the assaults of pride ; our rising is oftentimes an occasion of our falling. And that which God gives man for his good, proves (by reason of this corruption mostly) his snare. One of the Ancients speaking of Pride, saith 'tis the greatest sin for foure reasons.

First, In the antiquity of it, because it was the first sin, the Devill's sin, before man sinned ; that sin which he first dropt into man to make him fall, was the sin by which himselfe fell ; he would be higher, and more then he was, and he provoked man to be so too. 'Tis disputed what was the original of original sin, and the doubt lyeth between two, whether unbelieve or pride had the precedency in mans fall, (a question much like that, whether faith or repentance hath the precedency in his rising) I shall only state it thus ; that which appear'd first was unbelieve ; the woman put a peradventure upon the threatning of God in case of eating the forbidden fruit. But certainly pride was Contemporary with unbelieve ; man would needs lift up himselfe beyond the state he had, and so fell from and lost that estate.

Secondly, Saith he, Pride is productive of many other sins, 'tis a fountaine sin, a root sin, it nourisheth, nurseth, and bringeth up many other sins ; no man knoweth what sin may be next when pride is first.

Thirdly, The greatness of the sin of pride may be argued from the over-spreading of it ; pride hath infected many mortally ; and who can say his heart is free from this plague, though possibly it be not the plague (or speciall master sin) of his heart ?

Pride.

Pride is an Epidemicall disease, all labour under this sicknesse, and this sicknesse hath got the mastery over many.

His fourth reason is that of the text and poynt; Pride is a great wickednesse, because usually it infects great men. They that are great in power, great in gifts, great in learning, great in any thing, are sure to be assaulted if not blemished and blasted with this sin, insomuch that it had been better for many to have been fools, then learned, low then high, meane then great, poore then rich in this world. There is a temptation in power, in greatness, in riches, in knowledge, in gifts, in the best things, to make the mind swell, and the man that is stored with them proud. Pride is (as I may say) of a very high extraction, it was conceived in and borne by the now Apostate Angels, whose place, *first estate* (or *principality*, as we put in the Margin of the Epistle of Jude v. 6.) was aloft in heaven. Angels were the neereſt servants and attendants upon God himſelfe, who calleth heaven *the habitation of his holinesſe, and of his glory*; And ſurely the habitation which the Apoſtle Jude in the ſame verſe ſaith the Angels *leſt*, (and he calls it *their owne*, that is, that which was allotted and allowed them by God as their portion, this habitation, I ſay,) muſt needs be a very high and excellent one, as themſelves by nature were in the higheſt claſſis or forme of creatures. Now as pride began from and had its birth in theſe high and noble ſpirits (which gave one occaſion (though it be as helliſh a luſt as *Quia natione* any in hell) to call it Heavenly by Nation) ſo the higher men *celestis subli-* are (who at higheſt are but duſt) the more doth pride haunt *mum animos* them, and inſinuate it ſelfe to get a dwelling or ſeate in them, as *inhabit.* the moſt proper and congeniall ſubjects which it can find here *Hugo.* on earth it ſelfe, with thoſe of whom it firſt tooke poſſeſſion and whom it made its firſt habitation, being for ever caſt downe from heaven. Pride having once dwelt in thoſe who were ſo high, loves ſtill to dwell or take up its lodging (at leaſt) in thoſe, who upon any reference whether to naturall, civill, or ſpirituall things, are called and reputed *Higheſt*.

Obſerve, Fourthly.

God by various meanes, even by all ſorts of meanes, gives check to the pride of man, he ſpeaketh once, yea twice to man in a dreame, in a viſion of the night, that he may hide pride from man.

Pride.

Pride is a sin which God prosecutes both night and day ; if speaking by day doth not mortifie it, speaking in the night by dreams shall. *Nebuchadnezzar* was full of pride, and God humbled him by a dream, and brought downe the haughtinesse of his heart by a vision of the night. This great Monarch of the world was so full of pride that he boasted it out (*Dan: 4. 30.*) *Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of the kingdome, and by the might of my power, and for the honour of my Majesty ?* Now while he spake thus walking in the Palace of the kingdome of Babylon, there fell a voyce from heaven, saying, *O King Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, The kingdome is departed from thee, &c. And they shall drive thee from among men, And thy dwelling (who hast thought thy selfe more then man) shall be with the beasts of the field.* The effect of this voyce *Nebuchadnezzar* had in a dreame, as appeares by *Daniels* interpretation of it in the former part of the Chapter. God shewed him in that dreame what his condition should be, and he executed it upon him to the full, to pull downe his pride ; That, *he at last might know that the most High ruleth the Kingdomes of men, and giveth them to whomsoever he will.* Whereas then he thought that he alone ruled the world, and could give kingdomes to whom he would. How wonderfully did God oppose the pride of *Pauls* spirit, he could not favour pride, no not in that eminent Apostle, *Lest through the abundance of revelations he should be exalted above measure, there was given him a thorne in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet him, (2. Cor: 12. 7.)* that is, God used extraordinary means to humble him. As here God is said to humble by visions, so there *Paul* being endanger'd to pride by receiving visions, God found a strange way to humble him, even by the buffetings of the messenger of Satan, who is the Prince of pride, and as (God speaketh of the Leviathan at the 42^d Chapter of this booke, v. 34.) *a king over all the children of pride.* God doth so much resist pride, that he cannot but resist the proud (*James 4. 6.*) and scorne the scorner, (*Pro: 3. 34.*) yea he hath told us of a day (*Isa: 2. 11.*) wherein *the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtines of men shall be bowed downe: and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.*

There are foure speciall pride-subduing Considerations.

First, They who are proud of what they have, are like to have

no more. When the Apostle had sayd (*James 4. 6.*) *He resisteth the proud* (he presently adds) *but giveth more grace to the humble.* As if he had sayd, Though the Lord hath given proud men much (for 'tis some gift of God, and usually a great one of which men grow proud) yet he will now stop his hand and give them no more. The Lord gives to them who are humble and praise him, not to those who are proud and praise themselves.

Secondly, Not only doth the Lord stop his hand from giving more to those who are proud, but often makes an act of revocation and takes away that which he hath already given. As he who Idly puts his talent into a napkin, so he who vainely and vain-gloriously shews it, is in danger of having it taken away from him. *It is as sinfull to shew our talent proudly, as to hide it negligently.* *Nebuchadnezzar* boasted proudly of his kingdome, and presently it was sayd to him, *The kingdome is departed from thee.* *Hezekiah* boasted of his treasure (*Isa: 39. 6.*) and by and by the Lord told him, his treasure should be taken away, (though not immediately from him, yet from his posterity) and carried to *Babylon*. 'Tis so in spiritualls, when we proudly shew our treasure, the treasures of our knowledge, or other gifts and attainments, the Lord many times, in judgement, sends them into captivity, takes them from us, and strips us naked of that cloathing and adorning whereof we are proud.

Thirdly, If God doth not take all away, yet what remaines is withered and blasted, it dries up and comes to little; if it be not quite removed, yet it appeares no more in its former beauty and luster. When *God with rebukes correcteth man for (this) iniquity, he maketh his beauty* (the beauty of his parts and gifts, yea of his graces) *to consume away* (as *David* expresth it, *Psal: 39. 11.*) *like a moth.* O what a dryness, and so a decayedness falls upon that soule from whom the soaking dewes and drops, the sweete influences of heaven are restrained! And surely if they are restrained from any, they are from proud men; No marvaile then, if others see and they feele their witherings, and even senci-ble declinings every day.

Fourthly, Suppose the gifts and parts of a proud man continue florid and appeare still acting in their former strength, vigour, and beauty, yet God sends a secret curse upon them, and though he doth not wither them, yet he doth not delight in them, nor
give

Optimum est
non nasci pro
cecinum cito
mori.

give them any acceptation. The best things how long soever continued to proud men, are no longer blessings to them; yea it had been good for them, that either they had never had them, or that they had been soone taken away. That as one sayd falsely of the life of man in generall, but truely of wicked men; *It had been best for them not to have been borne, and their next best would be to dye quickly.* So I may say in this case of proud men; It had been best for them they never had received any eminent gifts from God, and their next best would be to have them quickly taken away; For as wicked men in General (if they dye uncorrupted) the longer they live, the worser they live, and every day by adding new heapes of sin, heape up further wrath against the day of wrath; So proud men in speciall, the longer they have and hold their gifts, their riches, their honours, their powers, doe but abuse them the more, to the increase of their sin here, and (without repentance) shame hereafter.

And therefore to shut up this observation, and the exposition of this verse, I shall only give some few directions or counsels for the cure of this soule-sickness pride, or for the pricking of a pride-swolne heart, that so the winde, that noxious winde of ostentation, by which proud men are vainely puffed up in their fleshly mindes, may be let out and voyded.

First, Let the proud man consider what he is; Some have asked blasphemously, *What is the Almighty?* as we saw at the 21th Chapter of this Booke: But it may well enough be asked, *What is man that the Almighty should be mindfull of him* (Psal: 144. 3, 4.) and may we not much more question againe, *What is man that he should be so mindfull of himselfe?* David, a great king said to the Lord (2 Sam: 7. 18.) *Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that thou hast brought me hitherto?* Thus every man should say to himselfe, or put the question to his owne soule; *Who am I? or what am I,* that I should have a proud thought? All men indeed differ in some things, and some differ in very many things. Men of high degree, and men of low degree differ, men of knowledge and ignorance differ, learned and unlearned men differ. And it is not only, as I may say, a peice of heraldry, but a peice of divinity to keep up the differences of men. Yet what is any man, whether high or low, knowing or ignorant, learned or unlearned, that he should be proud? they all agree in this,

they

they are all dust and ashes, they are all but as a shadow, or a vapour, they are all as grass, or as a flower of the field, and at their best estate (in the very height of their excellency) they are altogether vanity: How much soever men differ in other things, yet in this they all agree, or are all alike in this, they are all vanity. Then what is man that he should be proud? Shall dust and ashes, shall a passing shadow, or a disappearing vapour, shall withering grass, or fading flowers, shall vanity it selfe be proud? The best of men at their best, are the worst of all these, why then should any man be proud? Yea I may put the question further, *How can any man be proud, who knoweth what man is?* and acknowledgeth himselfe to be but a man. I will adde yet further in this questioning way, How can any man be proud who knoweth himselfe to be (which is a more humbling consideration, then any of or then all the former) a sinfull man! We ought alwayes to be humbled for sin, and shall we who are at all times sinning, be proud at any time?

Secondly, To cure pride of spirit, Consider what ever man is (as to this world) he cannot be long what he is. He that is high in the world, cannot be long in his worldly heights. He that is rich in the world, cannot long enjoy his worldly riches; yea knowledge vaniseth; all such kinde of knowledge, learning and skill as men now have, is a meere vanishing thing; man, in his highest perfections, is very mutable, and the higher he is, the more mutable he is; what hath he then to be proud of? We have some changes every day, and when a few dayes are past, we shall come to our great change; our change by death is but a few dayes off, for the utmost of our dayes are but few. As man is not to be accounted of by others, so not by himselfe, *because his breath is in his nostrills*, and he may quickly perish (*Isa: 2. 22.*) Shall perishing things be proud things? Shall they be lifted up with what they have, who (as to this world) have so little being, that they can scarcely be sayd to be. By this argument all men are called off from trusting those that are highest in this world (*Psal: 146. 3.*) *Their breath goeth forth.* And we have the same argument, not to be high in our owne thoughts, because our breath goeth forth, and there is an end of us.

Thirdly, Consider all those things which are as fewel and occasions of pride in man, even for those man must shortly give an

account. And ſurely he who remembers that whatſoever he hath, be it riches, ſtrength, honour, parts, knowledge, or learning, he muſt come to a reckoning for it, that man will not over-reckon himſelfe ſo much for it, as to be proud of it. The Apoſtle concludes, *So then every man muſt give an account of himſelfe to God,* (*Rom. 14. 12.*) That is, of all his receipts, and of all his expences, what hath been beſtowed upon him, and how he hath improved what hath been beſtowed. He muſt give an account of himſelfe in his naturall capacity as a man ; and he muſt give account of himſelfe in his civill capacity, as a rich or great man ; and he muſt give account of himſelfe in his ſpirituall capacity, as he hath enjoyed meanes to make him gracious, or to grow in grace. He muſt give an account of himſelfe about all the good things he hath received, what good he hath done with them, either to himſelfe or others. He that is ſerious upon ſuch a meditation as this, ſhall finde two effects of it ; Firſt, it will keep him very buſie, and free him from Idleneſſe ; Secondly, it will keep him very humble and free him from pride. Who can glory vainely in his Stewardſhip (for all we have is put into our hands as Stewards, who, I ſay, can glory vainely in his Stewardſhip) that alwayes heares this voyce ſounding in his ears, *Come give an account of thy ſtewardſhip, for thou mayeſt be no longer Steward.* O how ill an account will they make when they are asked, what they have done with their riches ? who muſt answer, *We have been proud of them ;* who being asked, what have you done with your honour, muſt answer, *we have been proud of it ;* who being asked, what have you done with your knowledge ? muſt answer, *we have been proud of it.* Theſe will be ſad answers in the day of account, yet proud men (whatſoever they have done with their receipts) muſt make this answer, what other answer ſoever they make.

Fourthly, Conſider that the more any one hath received (and it is the degree upon which pride riſeth the more, I ſay the more any one hath received) in any kinde whatſoever, the ſtricter will his account be ; for the account will be proportionable to what the receipt is. (*Luke 12. 48.*) *To whom ſoever much is given, of him ſhall be much required, and to whom men have committed much, of him they will aſke the more ;* where much is ſowne, there God looks to reap much. He looketh not only for improving, but for ſutable, for proportionable improvement. If he that had received

received five talents (*Math. 25.*) had brought only two talents more, and ſo made his five ſeven, this had not been proportionable, or if he that had received two, had made them three, this had not been proportionable; but he that received five, brought ten; and he that received two, brought foure; This account was proportionable to the receipt; and therefore to theſe their Lord ſayd, *Well done good and faithfull ſervants.* God looks for doubling, (as I may ſay) that we ſhould make his five ten, his two foure. Therefore why ſhould any man be proud of what he hath received, ſeeing the more he hath received, the more great and ſtricter will his account be.

Fifthly, That pride may be cured and hid from your eyes, I adviſe, That *in the miſt of your fullneſs, you would think of your emptineſs, and in the miſt of your perfections, of your deficiencies;* think how much, and in how many things you are wanting, when any thought of pride ariſeth concerning what you enjoy, or where in you abound. He that thinks how much he is wanting, will not be proud how much ſoever he aboundeth; and indeed our wantings being a great deale more then our aboundings, and our imperfections then our perfections, ſhould be to us greater matter of humbling, then our abounding or perfections can be an occaſion of pride. To cleare this further, Conſider your deficiencies two wayes; Firſt, in your ſelves; conſider how low you are in knowledge, how low in grace, how low in duty; remember that there is a great deale of darkneſs in the beſt of your light, a great deale of water in the beſt of your wine, and a great deale of dross in the pureſt of your ſilver; remember theſe weakneſſes in your ſelves, and then ſay as bleſſed *Paul* (*Phil. 5. 22.*) *I count not that I have already attained;* that is, that I have attained perfection, I am very much behinde, very much below my duty, I am below what I might be and have attained to, both in the light of knowledge, and in the ſtrength of grace. I am below what I might be attained to, both as to zeale for, and as to faith in God. O how many are our deficiencies when we have profited moſt! Secondly, Conſider your deficiencies in reference to others; The Apoſtle ſaith (*2 Cor. 10. 12.*) *They who compare themſelves with themſelves are not wiſe.* The reaſon why many think themſelves over-wiſe, is, becauſe they do not (as they ought) compare themſelves with others, or if they compare themſelves with others,

T t 2

they

they compare themselves only with those that are below, not with those who are above themselves. They who compare themselves with themselves, or with those only who are below themselves, are not wise, though they think themselves very wise. If we would compare our selves with other men, who are above us, it would mightily keep down the pride of our spirits; for who is there but might see more in some, yea in many others than in himselfe? Now, as it is an excellent means to keep the soule from murmuring and discontent, to consider that many others are below us; so it is an excellent means to keep us from pride, to consider that many others are above us; so much above us, that our knowledge is but ignorance to their knowledge, our strength weaknesse, our faith unbelieve, our patience unquietnesse of spirit, our very fruitfullnesse barrennesse compared with theirs; or to speak allusively, that our fat kine are but leane to the fat ones of others; and our full ears but withered looked upon with their full eares. And as it is a good meanes to keepe the soule humble or to cure it of pride, to compare our selves with men who are much above us, so especially, if we would but remember how much God is above us, in comparison of whom all our fullness is indeed emptinesse, our strength weaknesse, our riches poverty, and our light darknesse. And therefore when *Job* (Chap: 42.) began to compare himselfe with God, and to set God before him, then he was in the dust presently; though he spake over-valuingly of himselfe sometime, yet when once he came to set himselfe before God, then saith he, *I have spoken once, but I will speak no more; I abhorre my selfe, and repent in dust and ashes.* And when the Prophet *Isaiah* saw the Lord in his Glory, and compared himselfe with him, he cryed out, *I am undone, I am a man of polluted lips;* all his graces, and all his gifts vanished into nothing, when he considered the Lord before whom he stood. Thus we may keepe downe pride by considering our deficiencies, and comparing our selves with others who are above us, especially by comparing our selves with God, to whom we are not so much as a drop of the bucket to the whole Ocean, nor the dust of the ballance to the body of the whole earth.

Sixthly, For the hideing and keeping downe of pride, often reflect upon your own sinfulness; our defects in good may keepe our hearts low, but our abundance of sinfull evils may keepe them

them much lower. While we conſider ſin in a two-fold notion, how ſhould it humble us? Firſt, as dwelling or abiding in us; Secondly, as acted and brought forth by us in either of theſe wayes; look on ſin, and the heart muſt needs come downe; thus poyſon may expell poyſon, the remembrance of ſin abiding in us and acted by us, may be a ſtop to the further acting, as of all other ſins, ſo eſpecially of this ſin, pride.

Seventhly, Let us be much in the meditation of Chriſt humbling and abaſing himſelfe for us. What can kill pride, if the humblings of Chriſt doe not? O how may we ſchoole and catechiſe our proud ſoules with the remembrances of Chriſt in his abaſements! What! an humble Chriſt, and a proud Chriſtian! an humble Maſter, and a proud Diſciple! did Chriſt empy himſelfe and make himſelfe of no reputation, and ſhall we who are but emptineſſe be liſted up with a reputation of our ſelves, or with the reputation which others have of us; did he abaſe himſelfe to the forme of a ſervant, and ſhall we liſt up our ſelves, as if we reigned as Kings! he humbled himſelfe and became obedient to death, even the death of the Croſſe; and what have we to glory in but the Croſſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (*Gal. 6. 14.*) if we have any thing to be proud of, 'tis the Croſſe of Chriſt, *God forbid* (ſaith *Paul*) *that I ſhould glory* (or rejoyce and triumph) *ſave in the Croſſe of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whereby I am crucified to the world, and the world to me.* Think often and much of the humblings of Chriſt, and then you will think of your ſelves as meere nothings. This is the moſt effectuall means; through the Spirit, to bring downe the ſwellings of our hearts, and *to hide pride from man.* Thus much of the ſecond deſigne of Chriſt in ſpeaking to man in dreames and viſions of the night; the third followeth:

Verſ. 18. *He keepeth back his ſoule from the pit, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.*

This verſe holds out another gracious intendment of God, in revealing himſelfe to man by dreames and viſions of the night. He doth it thereby to give man warning and wiſdome to prevent, and eſcape that deſtruction which is ready to fall upon him.

He keepeth back his ſoule from the pit.

Some

Some referre this *He* to man himsele, that is, when God hideth pride from man, then man keepeth his soule from the pit, that is, thereby man is both admonished and instructed how to keep his soule from the pit. *They who avoyde the mountains and precipices of pride, are most assured of escaping a downe-fall into perdition.* Solomon tells us (*Prov: 16. 18.*). *Pride goeth before destruction, and a high mind before a fall* ; such a fall as *Elihu* here ipeakes of, *falling into the pit* ; therefore turning from pride is the escaping of the pit.

But rather (as most Interpreters) the relative (*He*) refers to God himsele, who both begins and perfects this great worke of Grace ; As he speaketh with a purpose to withdraw man from his purpose, &c. so he having effectually withdrawne him from it, and hid pride from him, he thereby humbleth him in the dust of repentance, and so keepeth back his soule from the pit.

The word rendred, *keepeth back*, notes a threefold keeping back ; First, by force, as a man holds another from falling into a pit, or running into danger ; he holds him whether he will or no. Secondly, there is a holding or keeping back by perswasion or entreaties, by seasonable advice and counsel ; so *Abigail* kept *David* from shedding blood (*1 Sam: 25.*) Thirdly, there is a holding or keeping back by authority, when a Command, or an injunction forbids a man from going on, and so stops his proceeding.

Thus we see there is a keeping back, either by outward force, or by counsel, or by command. And there is a keeping back according to any of these three notions, two ways. First, such a keeping back, as hinders the very attempt, such a keeping back, as stops the first motions, or step into an undertaking. Secondly, there is a keeping back when a man is deeply engaged in an undertaking, when he is gone on and is neere the journeys end of his owne purpose. Thus *David* was kept back from destroying *Nabal* when he was far advanced in that enterprise ; and *Abimeleck* was kept back from taking *Sarah Abrahams* wife when the matter had made a very great progress in his spirit. Both these wayes we may understand it here, though chiefly, I conceive, in the latter. Sometimes God keepeth man, either by his power, or by perswasions and commands sent to him, from setting so much as one foot forward in any sinfull way leading to the pit ; yet often he suffers him to goe on a great way, and when he is advanced

far

ἵνα ita prohibere significat ut cum de initio dicitur prohibetur, ne quid omnino a principio fiat: quod proprie inhibere dicitur: hic autem non ad initium refertur, sed ad jam captum, quasi jam esset homo in via ad exitum nisi deum cum monuisset. Coc:

far towards, yea is near, very neer to the pits brink, even ready to drop into it, then, then the Lord graciously keeps his soule from falling into it. This word is used in the negative twice to set forth the high commendation of *Abraham* (Gen. 22. 12. 16.) When God had commanded *Abraham* to offer his Son, and he was so ready to doe it, that presently God tells him, *Now I know thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld (or kept back) thy son, thine only son from me.* *Abraham* might have had many reasonings within himselfe to keep back and withhold his Son from being a Sacrifice, but, saith the Lord, *thou hast not withheld or kept him back;* There the word is used in the negative, as also upon the same occasion at the 16 verse of the same Chapter. And so by *Job* (Chap. 7. 11.) *Therefore I will not refraine (or keep back) my mouth.* It is as hard a matter to keep back, or hold the mouth in, as it is to keep back a head-strong horse with a bridle. Therefore the Holy Ghost useth that Metaphor (*Psal.* 39. 1.) But saith *Job*, *I will not refraine my mouth, I will not keep it back, let it take its course, I will speak in the bitterness of my spirit.* The word imports powerfull acting, take it either in the negative or affirmative. When the tongue is kept back, 'tis done by a mighty power of grace, and O how great as well as gracious is that power, which the Lord putteth forth to keep back a poor soul that is going, going apace too, from falling into the pit. *He keepeth back*

His soul from the pit.

But doth the soul fall into the pit? I answer, first, The soul is often in Scripture (by a Synecdoche) put for the whole man; *He keepeth back his soul*, that is, he keepeth him from the pit; secondly, possibly 'tis said, *he keepeth his soul from the pit*, to teach us that man by running on in sin, ruines his best part, it is not only his body, and his skin that he destroyeth by sin, but his very soul. 'Tis a mercy that God telleth us aforehand the worst of that danger, and the greainesse of the hazard, or how great a matter we venture upon evill wayes and workes. *He keepeth back his soul*

from the pit.

What pit? The word is rendred variously. First thus, *he keeps שׁוּמָה* *foveat,*
back *corruptio, mors.*

Eruens animam back his soul from corruption. The word is used for corrupting by
eius a corrupti- sin (*Gen. 6. 12.*) And God looked upon the earth, and behold it
one. Vulg. was corrupt: for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth; that
 is, all men were grown wicked and stark naught. In the very
 next verse (*vers. 13.*) The same word is used to denote cor-
 rupting by punishment due to sin; *Behold I will destroy* (or cor-
 rupt) *them with the earth*; that is, I will destroy the face of the
 earth, or deface the beauty of the earth, and I will also destroy all
 men from off the face of the earth. Secondly, the Septuagint ren-
 der, *He spares his soul from death*. Thirdly, the Caldee Para-
ἐπιλοιπὸν τῆς
ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ
σωτήριον. Sept.
Prohibebit ani-
am ejus a fo-
uca. Targ. word in the Hebrew tongue signifieth corruption, the pit, and death.
 The pit (or grave) is the place of corruption and the seat or house
 of death. We find the pit and destruction put together (*Psal.*
55. 23.) *they shall goe to the pit of destruction*; So then the same
 word may well serve to signifie a pit, corruption and death; be-
 cause in the pit dead bodies or carkasses putrifie and corrupt.
 Yet David prophecyng of Christ speaks his assurance of escaping
 corruption, though not the pit or grave. (*Psal. 16. 10.*) *Thou*
wilt not suffer thy holy one to see corruption, or the pit. It is this
 word; that is, *thou wilt not suffer him to corrupt in the pit of the*
grave; though being dead was buried and laid in the pit, yet he
 did not see corruption in the pit. That is, corruption had no power,
 no mastery over him; for he loosed the bonds of death (it being
 impossible that he should be held by them) the third day, yea
 with the first of that day, or as soon as it might be truly said that it
 was the third day; Christ was buried in the latter part of the
 sixth day of the week, and arose early the first day of the week,
 even when it did but begin to dawn towards the first day of the week.
 (*Math. 28. 1.*) And therefore seeing as naturalists (according to
 Scripture evidence, *Joh. 11. 39.*) testifie corruption doth not
 naturally take hold of the body till the fourth day after death. The
 dead body of Christ was altogether free from corruption, or
 Christ (as was fore-shewed by David in the Psaline) saw no
 corruption.

Further, this word *pit*, is taken not only for death, the grave, and
 corruption; but for those contrivances and plots which are made
 and laid for any mans death or destruction. Thus David said of
 his

his malicious and subtle enemies (*Pf. 7. 5.*) *Into the pit which they have digged, themselves are fallen* ; that is, they are taken in their own plots ; Those words of the Psalmist are an allusion to Hunters or Fowlers who make pits to ensnare birds or beasts ; we must not imagine that there were pits literally made for *David*, but the pit was a plot or a contrivance to doe him mischief, and he blessed God that as himself had escaped that mischief, so that the mischief-plotters and contrivers were taken with it themselves. We have *David* speaking againe under the same metaphor (*Pf. 9. 15.*) *The Heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made.* And (*Psal. 35. 7.*) *Without cause they have hid for me their net in a pit, which without cause have they digged for my soul* ; that is, they have laid a plot to undoe and destroy me. And if we take pit in this sence it may hold well enough with the scope of the Text, for what is the pit, into which pride and evill purposes thrust sinfull man, but that mischief and misery which Satan is continually plotting against him? And from this mischievous plot it is that God delivereth man, while 'tis said by *Elihu*, *he keepeth back*

His soul from the pit.

Some expound the word *soul* in this former part of the verse, in opposition to *life* in the latter part of it, *and his life from perishing by the sword.* Soul and life are sometimes taken promiscuously, or indifferently for the same thing ; yet there is a very great difference between soul and life ; the life is nothing else but the union between soul and body ; but the soul is a spirituall substance distinct from the body while remaining in it, and subsisting it self alone when separate from it. That bond or knot which ties soul and body together, is, properly, that which *Elihu* speaks of, in the next words.

And his life

As God keeps back his soul from everlasting destruction, so his life from temporall destruction. Though the soul be most precious, yet life is very precious ; *skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life* (*Chap. 2. 5.*) 'Tis therefore no small mercy for God to keep back a mans life

Exon

From perishing by the sword.

*Nomen gladii
hoc in loco ge-
neraliter deno-
tare puto, quia
quid pungit,
percutit, torquet
cruciat vel af-
figit. Bold.*

The sword is put sometime for warre, that being the principal instrument of warre ; some insist much on that sence here, as if the words contained a promise of being kept from perishing by the sword of an open enemy. But the sword is here rather put for any kind or for all kinds of hurtfull evils ; what ever doth afflict, vex, or destroy may be called the sword. The text strictly in the letter is thus rendred, *and his life from passing by or through the sword*, we say, *from perishing by the sword* ; which passing by the sword is not to escape the sword, but to fall by the sword, Thus 'tis said of that idolatrous King *Ahaz* (2 Kings 16. 3.) *He caused his sons to passe through the fire*, the meaning is not that he delivered them out of the fire, but consumed them in the fire ; for he made them passe through the fire to *Molech*, which was a sacrificing of them to that abominable idoll. It is also said (2 Sam. 12. 31.) when *David* took *Rabba* and destroyed the *Ammonites*, *he made them passe through the brick-kilne*, not to save them, but to consume them. Some conceive that this brick-kilne through which *David* made those captivè *Ammonites* to passe was the fire or furnace of *Molech*, that infamous Idoll of the *Ammonites* (with whose bloody and most cruell devotions the apostatizing Jewes or people of God, were in after times ensnared) And if so, then they might see God turning their sin into their punishment ; and declaring his fiery wrath against them in that, by which they had declared their foolish and abominable zeale. But that which I quote their punishment for, is only the forme of its expression ; He made them *passe through the brick-hilne* ; that is, *perish in it*. Thus here, *and his soul from passing by the sword*, is rightly translated *from perishing by the sword*. The word rendred *sword* signifies also any missive weapon, or weapon cast with the hand, especially a dart ; so Mr. Broughton translates, *and his life from going on the dart*. The generall sence of this verse is plainly this ;

*Transire in gladi-
um est idem
quod incidere
in manus et te-
la hostium, et
cadere in bello.
Gladius ἄλυσ
vocatut quasi
missile relin-
drat.*

The Lord withdraweth man from his purpose, and hides pride from man, that so he may in mercy preserve him from perishing both in body and soul, or that he may keep him not only from the first, but from the second death, which is the separation of the whole man from the blessed presence of God for ever. 'Tis a great favour to be kept from the pit where the body corrupts, or from the sword that wounds.

wounds the flesh, but to be kept from that everlasting woe which shall overwhelme the wicked in that bottomlesse pit or lake of fire and brimstone, this is the highest favour of God to lost man. This is the pit, this the perishing from which (saith Elihu) the Lord keepeth back the soul and life of man.

First, from the emphasis of the word, *he keepeth back*, importing, that God, as it were by strong hand or absolute authority and command, keepeth the soul of man from the pit.

Note.

Man is very forward to run upon his own ruine, even to run upon eternall ruine, if the Lord did not hold, stay, and stop him.

Man would tumble into the pit, at the very next step, if God did not keep him. The way of man naturally is downe to the pit, and all that he doth of his own self is for his own undoing: And as he is kept back from the pit, so (as the Apostle Peter hath it, 1 Epist. 1. 5.) *he is kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation.*

Secondly, considering the seaton signified in the former verse, that when man is going upon an evill work, or walking in the pride of his heart, God is keeping him from the pit.

Note.

While man hath sinfull purposes and pride in his heart, all that while he is going on to destruction, both temporall and eternall.

Every step in sin is a step to misery, and the further any man proceedeth on in sin, the further he wanders from God; and the further he wanders from God, the neerer he comes to misery. As the further we goe from the Sun, the neerer we are to the cold, and the further we go from the fountaine, the nearer we are to drought; so they that hast to sin, hast to sorrow, yea to hell. Solomon saith of such, they love death. There is no man loves death under the notion of death, there is no beauty, no amiableness in death; but all they may be said to love death, who love sin, and live in it. Every motion towards sin, is a hastening into the armes and embraces of death, sinners wooe and invite death and the grave, yea hell and destruction.

Thirdly, note.

The warnings and admonitions which God gives to sinfull man, whether waking or sleeping are to keep him from perishing, to keep him from temporall, to keep him from eternall perishing.

This is the great end of preaching the Gospel, the end also of preſſing the terrors of the Law ; both have this aime to keep man from periſhing. When man is preſt to holineſſe, and when he is re-preſt from the wayes of ſin, 'tis that he may not periſh for ever. God hath ſet up many ordinances, he hath imployed many instruments to adminiſter them ; many thouſands goe up and downe preaching to the world, and crying out to the ſons of men, repent and beleeve, beleeve and repent ; and why all this cry, but to keep ſouls from the pit, and their life from periſhing by the ſword ? The Apoſtle Jude exhorts *to ſave ſome with fear, and of others to have compaſſion*, that is, terrifie ſome that you may ſave them, make them afraid that they may not be damned ; *ſave them with fear*, plucking them as it were out of the fire. Sinners are running into the fire, and do not perceive it ; they are tumbling down to hell and conſider it not ; they muſt be pulled out of the fire, elſe they will burn in it for ever. The great buſineſſe of the Goſpell is to pull ſouls like firebrands out of the burning.

Fourthly, note.

They who turn from their evill purpoſes and the pride of their hearts, eſcape wrath, the pit, and the ſword.

The wages of ſin is death, and well are they that eſcape, that miſſe ſuch wages. If a ſinner turne from his purpoſe, from his ſinfull way, if his pride be ſubdued and he emptied of himſelf, then *his ſoul is kept from deſtruction, and his life from periſhing by the ſword.*

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 19, 20, 21, 22.

He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong pain.

So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.

His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out.

His soul draweth neare unto the grave, and his life to the destroyer.

THe context of these foure verses, containeth a description of the second meanes, which the wisdom of God is pleased often to use for the humiliation of man, and for the discovery or revelation of his mind unto him. *He speaketh in a dream, in a vision of the night*, as was shewed before, he speaketh also by paines and sicknesses, as is now to be considered.

Vers. 19. *He is chastened also with pain.*

That particle which we render *also*, gives the text an emphasis (*He is chastened also*) For it imports, that here is a further addition or supplement of meanes, whereby the Lord doth awaken sinners to attend and obey his voyce. The subject of these foure verses, is *a sick man*, or, *the sickness of man*. *A sorrowfull subject*. And the sickness of man is set forth in these foure verses, by foure sad symptomes or effects.

The first is paine, grievous paine, ver: 19. *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine.*

The second symptome of this sickness, is loss of appetite, and his nauseating all manner of food (v. 20.) *So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.*

The third symptome of his sickness is a generall languishment or consumption all his body over (v. 21.) *His flesh is consumed away that it cannot be seen, and his bones that were not seene stick out.*

The fourth and last symptome of this grievous sickness is fainting,

ing, swooning, or a readines to expire and give up the ghost (v. 22.) *His soul draweth near to the grave, and his life to the destroyer* ; That is, he is sick, and even sick to death. All these are speciall symptomes of a sick man, or of the sickness of man. I begin with the first.

Vers. 19. *He is chastened also with pain upon his bed.*

The word which we render *to chasten*, hath a twofold signification in Scripture.

כח' a reguit
reprehendit,
corripuit ver-
bis sine fastis.

First, to reprove or convince both by authority and reason (Lev: 19. 17.) *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, thou shalt in any wise rebuke him* ; or, *reproving thou shalt reprove him* ; that is, *Thou shalt surely reprove him*. And in that famous Prophecy concerning Christ (Isa: 11. 4.) *He shall reprove with equity* ; we put in the margin, *He shall argue with equity*, or convince by such reasons and arguments as shall carry the greatest equity in them. Thus when Christ had finished his Sermon on the mount, it is sayd (Math: 7. 28, 29.) *The people (his Auditors) were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*. This Sermon carrying so great a reproofe of the Scribes and Pharisees, both as to their life and doctrine throughout, may well be expounded as a fullfilling of that ancient prophecy ; It being confessed in another place of the Gospel, even by the Officers that were sent to attach him (John 7. 46.) *Never man spake like this man*. The words of Christ had so much evidence, so much equity in them, that they who came to take and catch him, were taken and caught, if not to conversion, yet to such a conviction, by what he spake, that they could not (though they highly displeased their Masters in saying so) but say, *Never man spake like this man* ; As if they had sayd, *Surely, the man that speaks thus is more then a man*.

Secondly, The word often signifies to correct, which is also to instruct ; correction is for instruction. *Chastning is the most reall reproving*. And so we render it, *He is chastened*. Man is instructed not only by speech and counsell, but by stripes and corrections. Thus David prayed (Psal: 6. 1.) *O Lord, rebuke me not in thine anger, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure*. The first word which we render *rebuke*, is that in the text ; As if he had sayd, *Lord doe not rebuke me by angry afflictions, let me not find thee greatly*

greatly displeased, and my selfe sorely chastened at once. He deprecates the same againe, and how grievous the effects of such dispensations are, he sheweth (*Psal: 38. 1.*) *Rebuke me not in thy wrath.* (*Psal: 39. 11.*) *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity ;* (He means it not only of word-rebukes, but of hand-rebukes also, when thou with such doubled rebukes dost chasten man for iniquity) What then ? The effects of it follow, even the staining of the glory of all flesh ; *Thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.* And so some interpret that (*Psal: 105. 15.*) *He reproveth Kings for their sakes ?* (speaking of his owne people) the Lord did not only speak to thole Kings, but made them feel his hand, for his peoples sake. *Abimelech* felt his hand for *Abrahams* sake. And so did *Pharoah* that hard-hearted King in a whole decade of plagues for *Israels* sake, whom he had oppressed and would not let goe. We render the word in this second sense, for a rebuke by blowes or by correction, which yet hath a language in it, and speaks with a loud voyce to man. *He is chastened*

with paine upon his bed.

Paine is both the concomitant, and effect of sickness. The word noteth, First, the paine of the body, caused either by the violence of inward distempers, or from the outward stroake of a wound (*Gen: 34.*) When the sons of *Jacob* had prevailed with the *Shechemites* to receive Circumcision, *It came to passe on the third day, when they were sore,* or pained with the wound of it, *Simeon and Levi came upon them* (*Gen: 34. 25.*) Secondly, the word signifieth as bodyly paine caused any way, so paine of the mind, which is griefe or sorrow (*Psal: 69. 29.*) *I am poore and sorrowfull.* Sorrow is alwayes the effect of paine, either outward or inward, either of the flesh or spirit ; yet the wounds of the spirit cause the greatest paine ; for of that *Solomon* saith, (*Pro: 18. 14.*) *Who can beare it ?* The same *Solomon* (*Pro: 14. 13.*) speaking of a wicked man in his highest jollity, saith, *In laughter the heart is sorrowfull.* His conscience aketh (if he have an awakened conscience) even while he laugheth ; and surely while the heart is sorrowfull and pained, laughter yeeldeth little pleasure. We may take paine in this text in both senses, but specially in the former. The sick man is often pained in mind, but alwayes in his body.

He

He is chastened with pain

Upon his bed.

There he used to have rest, but being sick his bed becoms restless to him. To be *upon the Bed*, is a periphrasis of sickness; That of Christ (Luke 17. 34.) *There shall be two in one bed, the one shall be taken, and the other left*, as it may be meant of any two Bed-fellowes (especially of husband and wife) in their health, so some take it principally of two in a sick bed; Grace takes hold of one and not of another upon a sick bed. I insist not upon that sense, though it be a probable and a profitable one. But surely to say, *A man is chastened with paine upon his bed*, implyeth, the man to be in extraordinary pain; as to say, *such a man keepes his bed*, implyeth, he hath more then an ordinary sickness, or that he is very sick. We have three expressions in our language gradually setting forth the sicknesse of a person; First, we say, *he keepes his house*. He that is not well doth not goe abroad, sickness house-ferth him. Secondly, we say, *he keepes his chamber*; that's a further degree, when sickness hath brought a man up staires, and shut him in his chamber, he is sicke indeed. Thirdly, we say, *such a man keeps his bed*; The meaning of which every one understands to be, that he is dangerously or extreemly sick. Thus when Elihu saith, *He is chastened with pain upon his bed*; we may conceive him so ill, that either he must not, or is not able to sit up. And Elihu in speaking thus, seemes to have relation to what Job had sayd (Chap: 7. 13.) *When I sayd my bed shall comfort me, and my couch shall ease my complaint; Then thou scarest me with dreames, and terrifiest me through visions*. As if he had sayd, O Job, thou indeed hast had recourse heretofore, to thy bed for refreshing and comfort, in silent meditations and soliloquies with God, but he terrified thee with dreames, and spake to thee by scaring visions, to turne thee from thy purpose. And not only so, but finding thee deafe to those admonitions, or not regarding them, yea still continuing thy unquiet murmurings, he hath now even made thee bed-rid, or unable to rise from thy bed. Though Elihu spake here in the third person, yet in all his speech he intended and poynted at, yea set forth and poynted out Jobs condition. *He is chastened with paines upon his bed,*

And the multitude of his bones with strong pain.

A man may have paine, yea many paines, yet no paine in his bones. Bones are to the body as beames and rafters, as posts and pillars are to a house. And when pain comes to the bones, when it shakes those posts and pillars, it must needs be a very strong paine. Satan sayd to God concerning *Job*, while he sought new tryalls for him, in the second Chapter of this Book (*vers. 5.*) *Touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.* And that he might be fully tryed, the Lord suffer'd Satan to afflict him to the bone, nor did Satan leave a bone unafflicted; what *Elihu* spake here of man in Generall, was true of him, *The multitude of his bones were chastened with strong paine.* To have any one bone in paine is an affliction, much more to have many bones pained and aking at once. But when the multitude of a mans bones, that is, all his bones are pained together, that's grievous. And such a man is the while as it were upon a rack. That by the multitude of bones here spoken of, we are to understand, not only many, or a great many of his bones, but all his bones, may appeare from (*Job 4. 14.*) where *Eliphaz* describing those terrible visions with which God sometime visited him, saith, *A spirit passed before my face, the haire of my flesh stood up, &c. which made all my bones to shake.* We put in the margin, *The multitude of my bones.* The multitude of his bones are all his bones, he hath not so much as one bone free. The whole systeme of his bones is as it were confounded and disjoynted. *The multitude of his bones is chastened with strong paine.*

*Multitudo os-
um dicitur pro
cunibus ossi-
bus quam multa
sunt. Coc:*

The word *paine*, is not exprefs'd in the latter part of the verse; the Hebrew is, *The multitude of his bones with strong paine.* Mr *Broughton* renders thus, *And all his bones with a sore one.* The word which we translate *strong*, signifieth two things; First, as we render, *strength or might* (*Psal. 74. 15.*) *Thou driedst up mighty rivers*; God dried up the river *Jordan* for his people to passe through, yea and the red Sea. Secondly, the word signifieth perpetuall lasting or continuall. So some render that place in the Psalmes, not *strong or mighty rivers*, but *he dryed up everlasting or perpetuall rivers*, such as had alwayes run with a full streame, and were not like those deceitfull brookes (spoken of in the 6th Chap: of this book (*v. 15th*) to which *Job* compared his Brethren) which in winter over-flow the bankes, but in summer, *what time they*

they waxe warme, they vanish when it is hot, and are consumed out of their place. Now, in this place, I conceive, we may take the word in either sense, either for strong and great or chronicall, and lasting paine. The man is so sick that he hath no good houres, no comfortable intermissions, his paine continueth. And because the word *paine* is not in the text, therefore it hath caused severall renderings of these words, yet all meeting in the same sense.

First, Some joyne the word *strong* to *bone*, or make it an epithite of the mans bones. *Though the multitude of his bones be strong*, that is, though he were once a strong man, sound and perfect all over, or as we say, *sound mind and limbe*, not crazy, not having the least flaw in him, yet he is chastened all over with paine.

Secondly, Others thus, *in the multitude of his bones*, or, *in all his bones there is a strong one*, that is, a strong paine or griefe seizeth and possesseth all his bones.

Thirdly, Thus, *The contention of his bones is strong*; the word which signifieth a *multitude*, being alike in the letters with another which signifieth *contention* or *strife*, hath given occasion for this reading; that of *David* is neere the same, *There is no rest in my bones* (Psal: 38. 3.) As if *Elihu* had sayd, the paine and anguish by which God doth contend with all his bones is strong, or God hath a strong controversie with his bones upon his sicke bed.

Lastly, The vulgar translates, *He maketh all his bones to wither, decay, and rott*. When there is a consumption or a withering among the bones, how intolerable is the paine! Broken bones cause the acuteſt paines, but decaying bones the most constant paine. Withering bones are opposed to fatned bones in that promise made to him that fasts spirituallly, not carnally only in abstaining from flesh. (Isa: 58. 11.) *The Lord will make fat thy bones*; As if he had sayd, Doe not feare that thou shalt pine by spirituall fasting, I will make fat thy bones. Which is true even in regard of that which is naturall, the Lord reneweth bodily strength to those who humble themselves soule and body. The body shall not suffer in this service of the Lord, if the soule be truly afflicted in it. Yet when he saith, *he will make fat thy bones*, it respects especially their spirituall strength, that thrives best in a day of holy abstinence and fasting. Here, when'tis sayd,

their

la multitudine
affium ejus est
fortis. i.e. acris
acerbus dolor.

Legendo vo-
cen 777 et
lis quam ejus
veherens est.
i.e. dolor affi-
um ejus per
quem cum ipso
velut lingat.
Pisc
Sunt ex He-
brais qui 777
multitudo, quia
per 777 scribitur
777 est legat-
ur per 7 expo-
nunt pro con-
tentione, quasi
dem cum affibus
ejus contendat.
Merc:

their bones ſhall wither through paine, it notes the declining of the whole body, becauſe as the bones are ſtrong in themſelves, ſo they are the ſtrength and ſupport of the whole outward man. When God ſmites the bones, then he ſhakes the pillars and rafters of our earthly houſe, and threatens the downfall of it. *He is chaſtened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with ſtrong pain.*

Taking theſe words in connection with the former, where *Elihu* ſpoke of thoſe dreames and viſions by which God ſpeakes to man, and ſuppoſing (as there he doth) that becauſe the man is not well awakened by thoſe dreames and viſions from his ſecurity, therefore the Lord ſendeth pain and ſickneſs upon him, as a ſecond meanes to humble him, and make him underſtand himſelfe.

Obſerve.

They that will not be inſtructed by dreames, that is, by gentler meanes, ſhall be inſtructed by paines.

They who will not take inſtruction, even in their ſleep, ſhall be taught by that, which will keep them awake. Severall Scriptures tell us of the Lords proceeding with man from words to blowes. And if the Lord proceeds from dreames (which are warnings in ſleepe) to blowes, if when he hath ſpoken to us in a dreame, we hearken not, he will chaſten us with paine, even the multitude of our bones with ſtrong paine. And then much more will he proceed from words to blows with them that are warned to awake, if they heare not and take warning. That's an awakening word to thoſe who ſleepe waking (*Pſal. 7. 12, 13.*) *If he turn not he will whet his ſword: He hath bent his bowe and made it ready.* If men will not returne upon word-admonition and reproofe, the Lord hath his arrowes and his ſword to reprove them with. *Turne ye at my reproofe*, ſaith the Lord. (*Pro. 1. 23.*) I give you warning to turne, but if you doe not, then (as preſently it followeth) *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your feare cometh.* As you have ſeemed to mock at my counſels, ſo I will mock at your calamities, that is, I will ſhew you no pity, as you have ſhewed me no reſpect. Thus the Lord deales with proud rebellious man, who caſts off his yoke, yea ſometimes he deales very ſeverely with his owne people (for they may put him

to it) if words will not serve their turne (words in sleepe, and words when awake) they may expect blowes next ; and be made to feele the hand of God, because they have not understood or not obeyed his will.

Secondly, From the manner of expreffion, *He is chastened with paine upon his bed.* The Spirit of God useth a word referring to instruction both by smiting and speaking, to shew that there is a voyce in the rod.

Hence note.

The chastisements of God upon us are our documents.

When God sends sicknesse and grievous paines, he reproves sinners from Heaven and chides them for the errours of their lives. The chastenings of the Lord are speakings. He speaketh by his rods beyond all the eloquence of words (*Mic. 6. 9.*) *Hear ye the rod.* The voyce of God is in his rod ; that speaks so loud from Heaven in many stroaks, that the prophaneſt sinners on earth are sometimes forced to heare and acknowledge it. As those Magicians were forced by the plaine evidence of the fact to say (*Ez. 8. 19.*) *This is the finger of God ;* So they must say, *This is the voyce of God.* He speaks to us, and speaks to purpose in these afflictions : The voyce of God in affliction, exceeds all the rhetoric and perswasions of mortall men. The crosse is a schoole, in which they who are dull at hearing what God speaks to them in his word, are wonderfully quickened up by his rod. *The words of the wise (saith Solomon) are goads.* And surely these goads of affliction are pricking piercing words, for the promoting and putting on of a lazy soul in Gods worke. *Job* had desired God to speak with him, *Elihu* answers, Why dost thou desire more answers or directions from God ? Hath not God spoken to thee in these soares and sicknesſes, in these chastisements, with pain upon thy bed ? Is God wanting to thy instruction ? hath he not clearly told thee his mind and thy duty ? hath he not written, yea engraven his will upon thy diseased flesh ? What are the paines, the corruption, the consumption, the strange deformity, and sad transfiguration of thy body, but as so many voyces of God, speaking and speaking aloud to thee, repent and humble thy selfe ? Therefore attend, hearken to and meditate upon the answers which he hath impressed or printed legibly upon thy head, face, and wrinkled

led forehead. Thou hast his answer his own way, therefore be satisfied, and doe not stand desiring that God would answer thee after thy way, nor complaining because he doth not. And we may reply not only to obstinate sinners, but to many of the people of God, when they enquire what the mind of God is, or what he intends towards them. His providences give you many items and memorandums; which if you can spell out and read you may know his meaning. This lesson, the signification of the word offereth us as the connection of the words offered in the former.

Thirdly, learne hence.

Man is a poor crazy creature subject to all diseases and infirmities.

Yea, he is not only subject to them, but he is the subject of them. His body is as it were a vessell of naturall corruption, as his soul is a vessell of morall corruption. Man is called not only *Adam*, noting the matter of which he was made, *earth, red earth*; but he is called *Enosh*, that is, sorrowfull, sighing, groaning man, he is a pined and a pining man. He is also called *Abel*, vanity, a poor vain man; which two latter Titles have befallen man since man fell from God.

Fourthly, (which may check the grosse Atheisme of many)

Observe.

Pain and sicknesse come not by chance, nor are we to stay in nature for the cause of their coming.

They come not at all by chance, nor doe they come altogether from naturall causes. Nature hath somewhat to doe in their coming, but somewhat else much more, even so much more, that in respect of that, naturall considerations may be quite shut out, and the whole cause ascribed to that. But what is that? surely, nothing else but, and nothing lesse then the will of God. He is pleased to give commission to pains and sicknesses, and then they come. *Elihu* would teach *Job* (what he owned before) that God was the sender and orderer of all his afflictions, as of the losses he had in his estate and children, so of the pains and sicknesses which he felt in his body. *Moses* tells the children of *Israel*, not only that sword and captivity, but the Pestilence, Consumptions, Feavers, and burning Agues are sent by God himself, (*Deut.* 28. 21, 22.)

What

What are diseases but the Lords Messengers? When he pleaseth he can trouble the temper and cause the humours of the body to corrupt. He can make them contend with one another to the death, let Physicians doe what they can to quiet and pacifie them. Yea though some skillfull Physicians have kept their own bodies in so due a temper, and to so exact a diet, that they could not see which way a disease could take hold of them, or have any advantage against them, yet sicknesse hath come upon them like an armed man, and carryed them away to the grave.

Further, When *Elihu* saith of the sick man, *the multitude of his bones are chastened with strong paine.*

Note.

No man is so strong, but the Lord is able to bring him down by pain and sicknesse.

He that is strong as an Oake, and hath (as it were) a body of brasie and sinews of iron; yet the Lord can make him as weak as water. The Lord hath strong pains for strong men, and can quickly turne our strength into weaknesse. Thus *Hezekiah* lamented in his sicknesse (*Isa. 38. 13.*) *I reckoned till morning that as a Lion, so will he break all my bones.* God can arme diseases with the strength of a Lion, who not only teareth the flesh, but breaketh the bones with his teeth. *David* saith (*Psal. 39. 11.*) *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth, surely every man is vanity.* The word there rendred *beauty* signifieth *desire*, thou makest his desire, or that which is most desireable in him to fade away; we well translate *beauty*, because beauty draweth the desires of man after it, and is so much desired, yea lusted after by man. Now, as when the Lord doth but touch the body, he can make the beauty, so also the strength of it to consume away as a moth.

Sixty, whereas it is said, *He is chastened with pain upon his bed.*

We learne.

The Lord can make those things easelesse and restless to us, which use to give us most ease and rest.

He that being up is weary, weary with walking, riding or labouring, hopeth to find ease in his bed, yet then doth pain deny him
rest

חמירו
*Desiderabilia
bene sanum et
bene curatum
corpus denotat.*

reſt there, and filleth him (as *Job* complained, *Chap. 7. 4.*) *with ſoſſings too and frowns the dawning of the day.* The Lord can make the Stocks or a Rack eaſie to us, and our beds as uneaſie to us as the Stocks or a Rack uſually are.

Laſtly, obſerve.

The purpoſe of God in chaſtening man with ſickneſs, is to teach and inſtruct him, not vex and deſtroy him.

The Lord hath many deſignes upon man when he afflicts him, about all which he inſtructs him by affliction. He deſignes

Fiſt, To humble and breake the ſtoutneſs of mans ſpirit; hence ſickneſſes and afflictions are called humiliations; and the ſame word ſignifies both to be afflicted and humbled.

Secondly, To make men taſte how bitter a thing ſin is; *This is thy wickedneſs* (ſaith the Lord of his ſore Judgements brought upon his people *Iſrael* (*Jer. 4. 18.*) *Beccaſe it is bitter.* Ye would not taſte the evill or bitterneſs of ſin by inſtruction, therefore I will teach you by affliction.

Thirdly, To put ſorrowfull ſinfull man upon the ſearch of his owne heart, and the finding out of the error of his wayes. While men are ſtrong and healthfull, they ſeldome find leiſure for that worke. And therefore they are confined by ſickneſs to their houſes, to their chambers, yea to their beds, that they may attend it, and read over the whole book of their lives (*Lam. 3. 39, 40.*) *Wherefore doth the living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſin; Let us ſearch and try our wayes, and turne to the Lord.* That's mans worke upon his bed; and 'tis Gods aime in binding him to his bed, that he may have liberty for that worke.

Fourthly, Afflictions are deſign'd by God to bring man out of love with ſin, yea to ſtirre up a holy hatred and revenge in him againſt it; as upon many other accounts, ſo upon this, becauſe it rewardeth him ſo ill, and he finds ſuch unfavoury fruits of it. A little digging will diſcover ſin to be the roote of all thoſe evill and bitter fruits, which we at any time are fed with in this world. Sin is the gall in our cup, and the gravel in our bread, and we are made to taſte bitterneſs and finde trouble, that we may both know and acknowledge it to be ſo.

Fiſthly, The purpoſe of God in afflicting us, is to ſet us a praying to and ſeeking after him. We ſeldome know our need

of him; till we feele it. (*Hof: 5. 15.*) *In their affliction they will seek me early*; affliction puts man upon supplication, yet every man who is afflicted, doth not presently seek God (many in their affliction mind not God, they seek to men, not to God, a crosse without a Christ, never made any seek God) but affliction through the workings of the Spirit of Christ, is a meanes to bring the soule to God; and we see the effect of it at the beginning of the next Chapter in the same Prophet (*Hof: 6. 1.*) *Come let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heale us, &c.*

Sixthly, God is pleased to exercise us with crosses, for the exercise of our Graces, or to set grace aworke; Grace hath most businesse to doe when we are taken off from all worldly busines, and are layd upon our bed, our sick-bed. Some worke is not dene so well any where else, as there. And many graces worke best when 'tis worst with us; they would even stand still, and have nothing to doe, if God did not bring us into straights, or keep us for a season in them. In a sick-bed the Lord shews us, and we may find work enough for all our graces, especially for faith and patience, and submission of spirit to his worke and will. We may doe better worke (and doe it better) in sickness then in health.

Seventhly, God brings many upon their sick-beds, to teach them the worth of health, and make them thankfull for it. They who are seldome sicke, are as seldome thankfull for their health, and scarce reckon that for a mercy, the want whereof, they have never felt. 'Tis rare that we prize what we have, till we have it not.

Eightly, God exerciseth many with sickness, with a purpose to put men upon a holy purpose of improving their health better, and of doing more for God while 'tis well with them.

Lastly, not a few are afflicted, that God may have an opportunity to doe his worke, and declare his power. God himself would be hindred of much glorious work, in restoring and recovering them to health, did he not chasten them upon sick beds. The question was put about the blind man (*Joh. 9. 3, 4.*) *Who did sin, this man or his Parents that he was born blind.* Jesus answered neither hath this man sinned nor his Parents, *but that the works of God should be made manifest in him.* If there had not been a blind man in the world, how could the power of God have been made manifest in giving sight to the blind? if some were not extreame

torturingly sick, how would the power of God be seenē in healing the sicke, and rebuking their paine ? For all these purposes, *Man is chastened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine.* We never profit by chastenings, till we answer the purposes of God in sending them, and unless we know what and which they are, we can never answer them. If we answer these nine toucht upon, we shall either answer all, or, to be sure, we shall baulke or refuse none. *Elihu* having thus shewed us the sicke man in paine, proceeds to shew us what further effect his paine and sickness wrought upon him.

Vers. 20. *So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soule dainty meat.*

This verse sheweth the second effect of sickness. The former was paine, This is loss of appetite, or nauseousnesse.

His life.

That is, his living body ; We may call the sick mans body a living body, though it be hard to say whether we should number him among the living or the dead. We read life put for the body which liveth, or whereby it liveth. (*Psal. 88. 3.*) *My soule* (saith *Heman*) *is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave* ; that is, I am ready to dye, and my body to be buried. He doth not say, he hath no great stomach to, but *his life*

abhorreth bread.

The word here used is of a Syriack derivation ; nor is it found any where in Scripture but here. The nowne signifieth any thing that is filthy, excrementitious or uncleane ; whence the verbe is rendred to *abhorre*, loath, or nauceate ; because we abhorre those things which are filthy or uncleane. *His life abhorreth bread.*

Vox □□□□ Sy-
ra est, notat
nauseare facere
nam סורס
sordes scorum
excrementum
quicquid sordi-
cum et in mun-
dum est vel in
humano corpo-
re vel ex eo
excretū. Drus.

That is common food. Sometimes *bread* is put for all kind of dyet ; as *David* sayd to *Mephibosheth* (*2 Sam: 9. 10.*) *Thou shalt eat bread at my table.* But because of that opposition in the text to dainties, by *bread*, we may here understand only Mercē ordinary food ; *His life abhorreth bread,*

and his soule dainty meat.

The Hebrew is, *Meat of desire*. Not only such meat, as men usually desire for the wholesomnesse of it, but such as curious palates desire for the pleasantness of it; such meat is here meant; Yea thirdly, such meat as the man had a desire to before his sickness for the sutableness of it to his owne taste and appetite, he then abhorreth.

His soule abhorreth dainty meat.

The turning of the stomach, and losse of appetite, are usuall symptomes of sickness; Almost all sicknesses weaken the appetite, and some take it quite away, so that the patient not only hath no desire to, but *loathes dainty meat, or meate of desire*. This phrase or forme of speaking is used (Dan: 10. 3.) *I (saith he) ate no pleasant bread, or no bread of desires* (as we put in the margin) *neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth*. 'Tis used againe (2 Chro: 32. 27.) *Hezekiah made himselfe treasuries for silver and gold, &c. and all manner of pleasant jewells*; we put in the Margin, *for all jewells of desire*. So (Amos 5. 11.) *Pleasant vineyards, or vineyards of desire*. It was the manner of the Hebrews to expresse pleasant by *desirable*, because pleasant things are much desired. *His soule abhorreth meate of desire, or dainty meate*.

Hence note.

First, *'Tis a mercy to tast our meat, or to take the comfort of what we eat.*

Many have meat, but cannot taste it. That which giveth the best taste to our meat, is a taste of the goodnesse of God in it (1 Pet: 2. 1.) *If ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious*. It is sweet to taste meat and the goodnesse of the Lord together.

Secondly, Note.

God can quickly make those things that are most desirable to us, dainty meat, meate of desire, loathsome to us.

Some abhor meat, because they have eaten of it long. The *Jewes* did eat Manna and Quails till they loathed them (Num: 11. 20.) Others loath meat, because they have eaten over-much. A third sort, loath some meat by a naturall antipathy against it.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, Others loath wholesome meat out of a curiosity, because it is not dainty enough. Lastly, Sicknes causeth a loathing of all meate, even of the most dainty and desirable meate. And the Lord at any time can make that which was our desire, our loathing. We have a like description of a sick man (*Pf: 107. 18.*) *His soule abhorreth ail manner of meat, and draweth nere unto the gates of death.*

Thirdly, Note.

The best of Creature-comforts are but vaine comforts.

What can dainty meat doe a man good, when he is sicke and ready to dye ? Then gold and silver, lands and houses, which are the dainty meat of a covetous man, are loathsome to him. When a man is sicke to death, his very riches are sapless and tasteless to him ; wife and children, friends and acquaintance can yeild little comfort in that dark houre, yea they often prove miserable comforters : When we have most need of comfort, these things administer least or no comfort at all to us. Is it not our wisdom then to get a stock of such comforts, as will hold and abide fresh with us, when all worldly comforts either leave us, or become tasteless to us ? Is it not good to get a store of that food, which how sick soever we are, our stomachs will never loath ? yea the sicker we are, our soules will the more like, hunger after, and feed the more heartily upon. *The flesh of Christ is meat indeed* (*Joh: 6: 55.*) Feed upon him by faith, in health and in sicknesse, ye will never loath him. His flesh is the true meat of desires, such meat as will fill and fatten us, but never cloy us. A hungry craving appetite after Christ, and sweet satisfaction in him are inseparable, and still the stronger is our appetite, the greater is our satisfaction. And (which is yet a greater happiness) our soules will have the strongest appetite, the most sharp-set stomacke after Christ, when, through bodily sickness, our stomachs cannot take down, but loath the very scent and sight of the most pleasant perishing meate, and delicious earthly dainties. Looke, that ye provide somewhat to eat, that will goe downe upon a sick-bed ; your sick-bed meat is Christ ; all other dainty food may be an abhorring to you.

Further, Not only are we to consider the sickness of the body, as the cause of this tastelesnes and listlesnes after bread. But

we are to consider the sick man *abhorring dainty meate*, under the hideings of Gods face, or in feares about his spirituall state; as appeares by that which followeth, *If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightnesse, or to set him right in his spirituall state, &c.* The sick man for want of that as well as for want of health, can taste no sweetness in the rarest dainties.

Hence note.

A sense of divine displeasure, or the hideing of divine favour from the soule, renders all outward comforts comfortlesse to us.

If a man have never so much health, yet the appearances of divine displeasure will make him sick of his most pleasant things. Carnall men can eat and drink, and live upon pleasures, yea upon the pleasures of sin, and goe on merrily with them a while, because they know not the meaning of the displeasure of God, nor doe they know what the favour of God meaneth; they understand not what they want, yea they flatter themselves that they have enough; and are well enough, though they have nothing, and are nothing, that is of any worth. But if God once awaken them out of this dreame, and shew them their cursed condition, all will be gall and wormwood to their taste, or as gravel between their teeth. As the sense of divine favour makes bitter things sweet, and sorrowfull things comfortable to us, the soure herbs of affliction dainties to us; So not only common but dainty meat, all the cares and viands of this world will be not only tasteless but bitter to us when God frownes upon us. An earnest in the love and favour of God is the good of all good things.

For the close of all, take these two Counsells, upon the occasion of these words.

First, *Receive your bread and dainty meate with prayer and thanksgiving*; you may quickly else come to abhorre your bread, yea and your dainties. The word and prayer both sanctifie and sweeten all creature-enjoyments.

Secondly, Take heed of abusing your meate; ye may quickly be brought to a loathing of it. When they who have given themselves up to luxury and intemperance lye upon their sick-beds and find their stomacke turned from all their dainties, it will be most grievous to them to consider how they have abused their dainties

dainties to feed their lusts. As some who abuse the creatures are punished with the want of them, so others with an abhorrence and loathing of them.

So much for this second symptome of sickness, *His life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat.* The third followeth, and appeareth in the generall decay and languishment of the sick mans body.

Vers. 21. *His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seene, and his bones that were not seene, stick out.*

In this verse and the next, *Elihu* still insists upon his description of the sick mans condition, and in them he gives us two other sad effects or symptomes of his sickness.

First, The generall wast and consumption of the body (vers. 21.)

Secondly, The utmost perill of life (v. 22.)

Elihu describes the first effect of sickness (the first here but the third in order) by two things.

First, By the disappearing of that which used to be seene, and appeare very faire and beautifull; the visible part grows (as it were) invisible, *his flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seene.*

Secondly, By the appearing of that which used not to be seene; his invisible parts (not so in their own nature, but as to their place, I say, his invisible parts) grow visible, *His bones which were not seen, stick out.* Thus with much elegancy he sets forth the sorrowfull and deplorable estate of the sick man.

His flesh is consumed away.

As if he had sayd, Before his sickness he was full of flesh, fat and faire, but falling into sickness, he falls away, and is worne, (as we say) to skin and bones; *his flesh is consumed.* Flesh, in Scripture, is taken two wayes.

First, Improperly, and Tropically.

Secondly, Literally or Properly.

In a Tropickall and Improper sense, *flesh* signifieth our sinfull corruption (Gal: 5. 17.) *The flesh evermore lusteth against the spirit,* that is, the unregenerate part in man against the regenerate.

These

These two are alwayes contending and combating with one another in all those whom Christ hath conquered to himselfe. Happy are they that finde their flesh, in this sense, consuming away; and 'tis that which every man is studying (who knows what godlinesse meanes) the consumption of this flesh, even the mortification of his lusts, of pride and earthlines, of wrath, envie, and unbelieve.

Secondly, flesh by a figure is put for the whole naturall body, consisting of many parts dissimilar to flesh. Thus the Psalmist complained in prayer; that, *the Lord had given the flesh of his Saints, to the beasts of the earth* (Psalm. 79. 2.) that is, he had exposed their bodies, through the rage and cruelty of their enemies, to the teeth and bowells of savage and ravenous beasts.

Thirdly, flesh is also put for the whole man consisting both of soul and body. (Gen. 6. 12, 13.) *The Lord saw that all flesh had corrupted their wayes.* That is, all men (who are made up of a body and soul) had corrupted their wayes by letting loose and acting their sinfull corruptions.

Fourthly, flesh is sometimes put for that which is best in man, his greatest naturall perfection, whatsoever in him is lesse then grace, whatsoever is highest in him, below the spirit, is called flesh in Scripture. When Peter (Math. 16. 17.) had made that blessed confession which is the rock upon which the Church is built (*thou art Christ the Son of the living God*) presently Christ tells him *flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee*, that is, the highest, and the most perfect piece of nature hath not taught thee this lesson; the Evangelist saith of all true beleivers (who have received this power (or priviledge) to become the sons of God) *they are borne not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh*. (Joh. 1. 13.) that is, the best of the creature, contributes nothing to the bringing forth of new creatures, the sons of God.

Fifthly, flesh by a figure is put for all that in religion, or in the worship of God, which is outward, or open to the eye; whatsoever comes under any humane observation, is but the flesh of Religion, or the flesh of worship. In this sence the Apostle puts the question (Rom. 4. 1.) *What shall we say then, that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found?* What he means by the flesh, he tells us in the next words, *he was not justified by works*, that is, not by any thing that did appeare, nor by any thing done to him or done by him. He was not justified by Circumcision, or
by

by the uſe of any externall rite, he was not juſtified by his own righteouſneſs, or obedience to the Law. The ſame Apoſtle alſo calls the very worſhip of the Goſpell, as to the outward part of it, *fleſh* (*Phil. 3. 3.*) *For we are the Circumciſion, which worſhip God in the Spirit, and rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh.* That is, in any outward work, or priviledge which we have in our Goſpell ſtate. All this fleſh likewiſe ought to be conſumed in our apprehenſions, that is, we muſt make nothing of it, nor reckon it any thing in our account for juſtification in the ſight of God or acceptance with him.

Secondly, Fleſh properly taken is that integrall and ſimilar part of the body, which is oppoſed to blood and bones, to veins and ſinews. When *Elihu* ſaith *his fleſh is conſumed*, we are to underſtand it either in this proper ſence, or in the ſecond figurative ſence before named, as fleſh is put for the whole body; *his fleſh is conſumed*, that is, his fleſh in oppoſition to his bones ſpoken of before, or his fleſh that is his outward man.

Is conſumed.

The Originall word ſignifies to *wax old*; for as when a man re- סניט *ſenuit*
covers from ſickneſſe, his fleſh is ſaid to returne like the fleſh of *conſenuit in pē*
a child. So when he is under the extreamity of any ſickneſſe, his *et conſumſit.*
fleſh, as it were, waxeth old, or withereth like the fleſh of an old man. Thus 'tis tranſlated (*Lamen. 3. 4.*) *My fleſh and my ſkin hath he made old*; that is, though I am not old in yeares, or how young ſoever I am, yet God, by many ſufferings, hath made me look like an old man; I am decayed and weake. *David* ſpeaking of wicked worldly men; tells us, (*Pſal. 49. 14.*) *Their beauty ſhall conſume in the grave*; As death and the grave make a torall and ſinall conſumption of the beauty of bad men, that is, of all that ſplendour and bravery wherein they lived, while they lived in the body; ſo paines and ſickneſſes do exceedingly conſume the body, and eate out the fleſh. As a tyrannicall oppreſſor eates out the people under his government, in which ſence this word is applyed (*Dan. 7. 25.*) Or as a garment is worn out by time and uſing. The fleſh is often in Scripture compared to a garment, and dying to uncloathing; becauſe when we dye we put off the fleſh. The garment of the fleſh; that beautifull garment waxeth old and weares out apace on a ſick bed. Sickneſſe not only ſtaineth
and

and abareth the beauty of it, but wasteth it deeply, to that, as it followeth

it cannot be seene;

Or as Mr Broughton renders, *his flesh wasteth away from sight*, or he hath no flesh left to be seene.

Again, When it is sayd, *his flesh is consumed away* that it cannot be seene, some expound it thus; *His flesh is so consumed away, that the seer withdraweth from it*; or no man cares to see it, that is, the sick man is so discoloured and wasted, that visiters and spectators start and are almost frighted to looke upon him. The flesh of man in a healthfull and flourishing condition, is a lovely spectacle, and draws beholders, but the flesh of a very sick man is a gastly spectacle and a regreet to the beholder. We love not to see that which we doe not like. Beauty attracts, deformity withdrawes the eye. It is sayd of *Iesus Christ himselfe*, that he was so deformed by his sufferings (*Isa: 52. 14.*) that many were astonish'd at him (*his visage was so marred more then any man, and his forme more then the sons of men*) and (*Isa: 53. 3.*) *We hid as it were our faces from him, he was despised and we esteemed him not*; that is, he was so dis-figured by sorrow, that no man cared to look upon him. Thus 'tis often with the sick. And this is a profitable and a probable sense of the text in hand; *His flesh is consumed away*, and then he who before delighted to see it, is troubled at the sight of it, or is rather affrighted then pleased in seeing it.

Quid si carnem consumi à visu, There is yet a fourth-reading, which further aggravates the sick mans consumption; *His flesh is consumed in sight*; that is, say some, his flesh doth consume so fast, that a man may almost see him consume; as we say of some plants, they grow so fast, that we may, almost, see them grow; so we may say of those that decline and fade much, we may see them consume, their flesh consume even to the eye or to view. He that looks stedfastly upon them, may see them fade and wither like a flower, yea they seeme to fade by his looking or fixing his eye on them.

per elegantem hyperbelen esset, tam manifeste indies marcescere, ut quasi ab ipso respectantis oculo consumi videretur. Bold:

Hence note.

First, *The flesh of man is a very fading and declining thing.*

It quickly consumes and drips away in a disease; A violent feaver or any other acute disease, dries up the spirits, and drinks

up the moyſture, and how ſoone doth ſuch a man decay! and as the extremity of a diſeaſe, ſo extreame want of food or famine conſumes the fleſh. Hunger having nothing to eate, feeds upon the fleſh of the hungry, till all be eaten up. We read (*Lam. 4. 8.*) how rudely famine dealt with the fleſh of thoſe delicate *Nazarites, who were purer then ſnow, whiter then milke, they were more ruddy in body then rubyes, their poliſhing was of Saphire*; yet the next words tell us, *Their viſage is blacker then a coale, they are not knowne in the ſtreets, their ſkin cleaveth to their bones: it is withered, it is become like a ſticke.* And though a man eſcape ſickneſſe, and famine doth not eate up his fleſh, yet time (that great eater) will, old age will waſt what famine and ſickneſſe have not toucht. As the Prophet threatned, what the Caterpillar hath left, the Cancker-worme ſhall devoure; ſo what ſickneſſe leaves, time will certainly conſume. Thus bodily fleſh is every way liable to a conſumption; and therefore the Prophet being commanded to cry, and putting the queſtion, what ſhall I cry, had this answer, *All fleſh is graſſe.* (There indeed *fleſh* is taken in the moſt comprehensive notion, as to all externalls; not only the fleſh of the body, but all the riches, honours, and dignities of this world, come under the name of fleſh there) *All fleſh is graſſe* (*Iſa. 40. 6.*) But why doth he call it graſſe? 'Tis ſo under a two-fold conſideration. Firſt, for the greeneneſſe and faireneſſe of it. God hath put beauty upon this fading fleſh, both for the comfort, and for the tryall of man; that fleſh is faire as a flower, is matter of delight; and to abſtract our thoughts or weane our hearts from that which is faire and delightfull, is matter of tryall. How hardly are we taken off from affecting fleſh, our owne or others, while this graſſe continues beautifull and Greene! Secondly, *Fleſh is graſſe*, becauſe ſoone gone (as it followeth in the Prophet) *The graſſe withereth and the flower fadeth, becauſe the Spirit of the Lord* (or his breath like a blaſting Eaſt winde) *bloweth upon it*; Which yet ſome expound more ſpiritually, of the Spirit of God diſcovering the vanity and mutability of all earthly things to the ſoule, for that preſently cauſeth the gayeſt and beſt of them to wither or be as a withered flower before our eyes. In which ſenſe David ſayd (*Pſal. 119. 6.*) *I have ſeene an end of all perfection.* Take fleſh in the largeſt ſenſe, and 'tis a conſuming thing; *The faſhion* (or ſcheme) *of the world paſſeth away*, and ſo doth the faſhion of all thoſe

those perfections, or most perfect enjoyments, which are but of a worldly birth and extraction. Flesh under every forme is a fading thing, especially the flesh of the best-form'd face & body of man. Whence take these six inferences. If the flesh the fairest outside of man be a fading thing, then

First, Be not desirous, much lesse ambitious, *to make a faire shew in the flesh*; for it may prove but a vaine shew, and at last, not so much as a shew. Flesh may so consume away, that it cannot be seene. When the Apostle tells us of some, *who desire to make a faire shew in the flesh* (Gal: 6. 12.) he specially meanes it of those that brave it and boast themselves in the outward part of religion, and would appeare much in the forme; *'Tis a most vaine thing to desire, to make a faire shew in the flesh of spirituall things, as hypocrites and formalists doe;* And 'tis a very vaine thing to desire to make a faire shew in the flesh of corporall things, as proud and vain-glorious men love to doe. Many desire to make a faire shew in the flesh of their bodyes; they love to have faire faces, and faire skins, to be fairely drest and deckt, is a great part of their care. But take heed of desiring to make a faire shew in this or in any thing that is called flesh. For when you have done all, flesh will be a nothing; And after you have bestowed much cost upon the flesh of this body, that it may be seene, a sickness may come and consume it, that it cannot be seene.

Secondly, Take heed of priding your selves in the flesh, when your flesh (possibly unsought by you) makes a faire shew; Though you have beauty, and the goodliest structure of body that ever was seene, though you have riches and honour, the highest built estate that ever was enjoyed, what have you to be proud of? will it not consume and moulder away? may it not melt like a snow-ball, or like wax before the fire? be not proud of any thing called flesh, how goodly a sight soever it is to the world, for in a little, in a very little time, there may be nothing of flesh left in sight. *His flesh is consumed away, that it cannot be seene.*

Thirdly, Be not over-carefull to provide for your flesh; the outward man, this body, or any thing that concerns it. As the Apostle utterly forbids us *to make provision for the flesh, to fullfill the lusts thereof* (Rom: 13. 14.) that is, those lusts that are exercised in the flesh; so, be not much carefull, not at all unduely care-

carefull to make provision for your flesh, to satisfie the necessities of it; for 'tis but a perishing thing. Be not carefull what you shall eate and drinke, and wherewith you shall be clothed, as Christ himselſe adviseth (*Math: 6.*) The flesh that you prepare for your flesh, is not more perishing then the flesh for which it is prepared. *Meates for the belly and the belly for meates, but God shall destroy both it and them* (*1 Cor: 6. 13.*) It will not be long before there shall be an end both of the meate that is eaten, and of eating meate.

Fourthly, If the flesh may soone be so consumed by the hand of God that it cannot be seene, then be not unwilling to waſt and consume your flesh which is seen in working for God, or in doing good worke, which is the worke of God: your flesh may consume upon worſe termes quickly, then working for God, why then should you be unwilling to consume it in Gods worke? Are not some so tender of their carkasse, and their skin, that they are afraid (though that feare be their shame and sin) of taking too much paines in the worke of God, lest they should dammage their bodyes, endanger their health, and consume their flesh? This flesh will waſt with idleness, is it not better to waſt it by industry in usefull services? The Apostle was willing *to spend and be spent* in the service of the *Corinthians*; That is, he was willing to spend not only his purse and his paines, but to be spent as to his bodyly strength, health and life. He cared not for his owne flesh, so he might be serviceable to their spirits, and promote their spirituall good, (*2 Cor: 12. 15.*)

Fifthly, Be not unwilling to waſte and consume your flesh in duty with God; as the flesh consumes in work for God, so in duty with God, in prayer and fasting and selfe-humbling, these are duties with God. Some are afraid of taking too much paines in these soule-works with God, lest they hurt their bodies, their flesh. We can never lay out our strength, or bring our flesh to a better market, we can never put it off at a higher rate (if it must be put off) then in wayes of communion with God. Yet let us remember we have a promise, that our bodyes shall thrive as well as our soules, even in those duties of communion with God, which are most expensive and severe to our flesh, prayer with fasting. (*Isa: 58. 61.*) *And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfie thy soule in drought, and make fat thy bones.* Which though

it may have a more spirituall meaning, yet there is a truth in it as to the poynt in hand. Holy Fasting, which is a *soule-fasting* duty (as all agree) is under a gracious promise, that it shall also be a *body-fasting*, yea a *bone-fasting* duty. Now, though we have a good assurance, that while we are trading with God for the gaine and encrease of our soules, our bodyes shall not waste nor be loosers, yet we should be ready to waste and weare off the flesh from our bodyes for the gaine and encrease of our soules.

Sixthly, Why should we be unwilling to offer our flesh to be consumed by the fury of men, or by the rage of flames in the cause of God, seeing it may ere long consume by sickness and not be seene? why should we be afraid to let our flesh consume or rot in prisons, or by tortures for Christ, seeing a disease will doe it, and hath often done it? Thousands of the blassed Martyrs, and suffering Saints, have rejoyced they had flesh to consume when God called them to it. So some interpret that Scripture before mentioned (2 Cor: 12. 14.) where the Apostle professed, *I am willing to be spent for you* (how spent? as an offering or sacrifice by fire) *in the service of your faith*, and in bearing my witness to those truths of the Gospel which I have preached to you. And indeed, he in that sense, spent his flesh at the last, he suffered death, and let his flesh fall, in holding up and holding out the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is better that our flesh should be thus consumed (if God call us to it) then that we leave it to be consumed by age or sickness, by wormes or rottenness. How freely should we offer up this flesh to so noble a consumption, seeing we cannot keepe it long from so meane a consumption, doe what we can?

Secondly, Note.

Sickness is a consumer; sickness is a consumer of all that will consume.

It consumes the body, and it consumes the purse, yea it consumes all our worldly comforts and concernments, it consumes every thing but grace. We say, *A time of sickness is a spending time*; the usuall reference of that expression, is to spiritualls. In health we gather grace and lay up truths, which we spend in sickness. But though sickness be a spending time, yet, it is not (I am sure it ought not to be) a wasting time to grace and spiritualls.

tualls. A ſpending time it is, that is, a time wherein a godly man may lay out a great deale of his ſpirituall ſtock and heavenly treaſure, a great deale of faith and patience, a great deale of ſweet contentation and ſelfe-ſubmiſſion to God. But ſickneſſe is not a waſting time to any of theſe graces or heavenly treaſures; yea where grace is reall and active, it is not only not waſted or conſumed, but encreaſed and improved, occaſionally, by ſickneſſe; God having promiſed, *that all things ſhall worke together for good to them that love him* (Rom: 8. 28.) will not ſuffer the beſt things of thoſe that love him (their graces) to take hurt by the worſt of bodily ſickneſſes. Sickneſſe doth only dammage the body, and deſace the beauty of the fleſh; and it quickly doth, as *Elihu* affirme of his ſick man in the text, *His fleſh is conſumed away, that it cannot be ſeene*, yea, as it followeth

And his bones that were not ſeene, ſtick out.

Fleſh and bones are the two eminent materialls of this faire and moſt regular building, The Body of man. The Bones of a healthy and ſtrong man, are not ſeene becauſe they are covered with fleſh; they are only felt or perceived through their clothing, ſkin, and fleſh. God hath put theſe very comely and beautifull garments as a covering upon our bones: but ſickneſſe pulls away theſe coverings, it pulls away the cloaths from our bones, and makes them appeare, as it were, naked. When the fat is dript away, and the fleſh is ſpent, the bones ſeeme to ſtand out. We commonly ſay of a man that hath been conſumed by a lingering ſickneſſe, *He is a very Skeleton, he lookes like an Anatomy*, which is nothing elſe but a pack of bones, the fleſh is gone. Thus *David* mourned (Pſal: 31. 10.) *My life is ſpent with griefe, my yeares with ſighing, my ſtrength faileth becauſe of mine iniquity: and my bones are conſumed.* The ſin-ſickneſſe of a ſenſible ſoule conſumes the bones, more then any bodily ſickneſſe. This was not only the conſuming but the breaking of *David's* bones (Pſal: 51. 8.) And as his ſorrow for his owne tranſgreſſions, ſo his ſorrow for the afflictions of *Sion*, had the like effect in him (Pſal: 102. 3, 4, 5.) *My dayes are conſumed like ſmoake or into ſmoake. (they vaniſh like ſmoake) and my bones are burnt as a hearth. My heart is ſmitten, and withereth like graſſe; ſo that I forget to eate my bread; By reaſon of the voyce of my groaning, my bones cleave to my ſkin.*

Some

Et comminuen- Some read this Text, *His bones are diminished*, lessened, wast-
 tur ossa ejus, ed, or broken in pieces, as if the consumption reached not only
 non videntur; his flesh but his bones too. That's a fierce disease which at once
 interpretantes invadeth and wasteth the bones. The word which we render to
 vocem IED in stick out, signifieth in the Syriack Idiom, the abating lessening or
 significatione breaking of any thing into lesser parts or pieces. And so those
 Syriaca. Pisc. words (*are not seen*) in the text (which according to our tran-
 Significationē slation refer to the time of health, when a man is so fat and full
 Syriacam malo fleshed, that his bones cannot be seen, scarcely felt, those words
 quam omnes I say) are referred according to this translation to the time of
 penę hebræi se- sickness, which is supposed so to diminish and wast the bones, that
 quuntur. Merc: by an ordinary straine of Rhetorick they are said, not to be seen.
His bones are diminished, they are not seen. We also render this
 word in that first propheticall word concerning our restoring by
 Christ (Gen. 3. 15.) by *bruising*. It (that is the womans seed)
 shall bruise thy head (that is the Devills) and thou shalt bruise his
 heele. When bones are bruised, and as it were shuffled together,
 they cannot be seen in their proper places, or as once they were
 fixt by nature. This various reading doth not vary the generall
 sence of the Text; but only heighten and encrease it. We
 render fully and significantly, *his bones that were not seen, stick
 out.*

Hence note.

*There is no man so strong, there is nothing in man so strong that
 can stand out against the strength of sickness.*

Our bones are not made of brasse, sickness will diminish them,
 and pain master them.

Secondly, Whereas 'tis said, *His flesh (that was seen) is not
 seen, and his bones that were not seen stick out,* or are seen.

Observe.

Sickness makes a wonderfull change in man.

It puts that out of sight which was seen, and it brings that in
 sight which was not seen; This holds true, not only as to that
 which is naturall in man, his flesh and bones, of which this text
 treats in the letter; but 'tis true also as to that which is morall and
 spirituall in man, his virtues and his vices, his graces, and his lusts
 or corruptions. How often is the flesh (in a morall sence) that
 is,

is, the outward profession of a hypocrite consumed in sickness, and no more seen; *will the hypocrite alwayes call upon God?* (Job 27. 10.) He will not. He that doth all to be seen (that's the character of a hypocrite (*Math. 6. 5.*)) will in a little time doe such a little or rather such a nothing in Religion, that it cannot be seen at all. His profession is sick, when he is sick; and then also that which was not seen sticks out; the hypocrite covereth many of his corruptions, his impatiency, murmuring, and unbelief, in a day of prosperity with the skin at least or fair shew of faith, but in a day of trouble those dead bones appear, and stick out. A day of sorrow, sickness, and trouble is a great discoverer; it occasions the appearance and sticking out of many base lusts that were not seen before. 'Tis so also in the better way with godly men, their corruptions, that appeared upon them before, are abated, wasted, and consumed by affliction, and many of their graces which lay hid and unseen, stick out and appear gloriously in a day of trouble, or upon a sick bed. Their patience & submission of spirit under the hand of God, their long-sufferance and sweet self-resignation to the will of God, which lay hid, shew themselves. Sickness and affliction make wonderfull changes and discoveries both as to the outward and inward man; *'tis seldome seen or known either how good or how bad any man is, till he is in paine or reduced to some extremitie*; till his very bones are vexed, or till, as *Elihu* further describes the sick man in the next verse.

Vers. 22. *His soul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to the destroyer.*

When the disease is at the height (as Physicians speak) then the sick mans soul draweth nigh unto and is ready to goe downe into the grave. But doth the soul goe to the grave? I answer, the soul, here, as frequently in Scripture, is put for the person; as if he had said, *the man draweth nigh to his grave*; The soul being the noblest and most princely part of man, is honoured with the denomination of the whole man; or, because all the world is nothing to us (as Christ told his Disciples (*Math. 16. 26.*)) if we lose our souls, therefore man is spoken of as if he were nothing but a soul: (*Gen. 14. 21.*) *The King of Sodom said unto Abram, give me the souls, and take the goods to thy self*, we translate, give

give me the persons, and put in the Margin, *give me the souls*; Thus 'tis said (*Gen. 46. 27.*) *All the souls of the house of Jacob that came into Egypt were threescore and ten.* The Apostles rule of obedience to Magistrates runs in this straine, *Let every soul* (that is, let every man) *be subject to the higher Powers* (*Rom. 13.*) And I conceive the Apostlé expresseth it so, because there ought to be an inward subjection to that, as to any other Ordinance of God; the soul must be subject as well as the body to the powers of this world, that is, there must be (though no subjection of conscience, yet) a conscientious subjection unto Magistrates. Thus here, *his soul* that is, himself, the man *draweth near*

Unto the grave; to corruption, say some, to the pit, say others.

רנשל
Corruptioni
sepulchrum a
gravis vocatur
Sarcophagus.

Both are joynd or meete in the grave, for that is the pit of corruption. The Greeks call the grave *Flesh-eater, to draw nigh to the grave*, imports such a prevalency of diseases as bring a man to the graves mouth, to the very poynt of death; and then (as we say) *he is drawing on.* Whither is a sick man drawing on? surely to his grave; *David* (*Psal. 107. 18.*) having described the condition of sick men, adds, *they draw nigh unto the gates of death*; Here (which is the same) *Elisha* saith, *his soul draweth near to the grave.*

Hence note.

Diseases and death are near one another.

A sick bed and a grave are not far distant; *David* speaking of himself and others in extreame danger of death by the cruell plox and cunning snares of the enemy, hath a like expression (*Psal. 141. 7.*) *Our bones are scattered at the graves mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth*; as if he had said, we are so near death, that 'tis a miracle if we escape it. Though we are yet alive, yet we have the sentence of death in our selves, and are within sight of our graves. What *David* spake there of himself in consort with others, *Heman* spake personally of himself (*Psal. 88. 3.*) *My life draweth nigh unto the grave*; We are alwayes in our health drawing towards the grave, but in sickness we are drawing near unto it. There is but a little distance between any man and the grave, there is scarcely any distance at all between

tween a man that is very sick and the grave. Now if the sick man be drawing near unto the grave, then

First, Let them that are sick remember the grave ; 'tis our duty to be alwayes remembring and meditating upon the grave in our health, much more should that be our remembrance & meditation, when we are sick, most of all when we are sick unto death, or ready to dye and drop into the grave.

Secondly, If the sick are drawing neare unto the grave, then let sick men draw near unto God ; if ever you will draw near unto God, the living God, be sure to doe it upon the borders of death ; 'tis good yea best to draw nigh unto God when we are well, and all is well with us, even at best in the world (*Psal. 73. 25.*) But when we are in danger or drawing nigh unto death, O how earnestly should we draw nigh unto God, in the aetings of faith, and love ; *To whom should we goe* (as Peter said to Christ, *Joh. 6. 68.*) in the appearances and approaches of temporall death, but unto him who hath the words of eternall life. It is high time for us to draw nigh unto God, when any of the comforts of this life are withdrawing from us, is it not more then high time therefore, to draw nigh to him, when life it selfe is withdrawing from us, and we drawing nigh to the grave ! *How miserable is their condition who have death near them, and God far from them. Though we walke through the valley of the shadow of death, yet* (as David professed he would not, *Psal. 23. 4.*) we need not feare any evill, while *God is with us* ; but how will the very shadowes of death put us in feare, if God be not with us ? and what confidence can we have of his being with us, if we are not acquainted with him, if we use not to draw neare to him ?

Thirdly, If they that are sick draw near unto the grave, then it is good for such as come to visit their sick friends, wisely to mind them of the grave ; when will a discourse with our friends of death and the grave be seasonable, if not when we see them dying and going to the grave ? yet some, when they visit sick friends, will not speak a word of either ; they fear it may hasten death to hear of it, & that speaking of the grave may put them into it, then which I know no fear more foolish, or more to be feared. Yea some will forbid visiters to mention death, when their Relations lye sick, O doe not speak of death to my Husband, saith the Wife, &c. But remember it, if the sick are drawing near to the grave,

A a a

they

they that visit them should remember them of the grave, both in prayer and in conference ; to speak of death cannot hurt the body, but the not speaking of it may hurt the soul, and hinder it from getting out of the snares both of spirituall and eternall death. Yet godly prudence and great caution is to be used about it ; none should doe it bluntly, nor suddenly, but having by discreet insinuations, first hinted to the sick man his danger of death, we should then by faithfull counsellis prepare him for it, and by comfortable Scripture cordialls strengthen and arme his spirits against it. Such savoury and well mannaged discourses of death may (through the blessing of God) be a favour of eternall life to the sick man, and will not in the least prejudice his recovery from sickness, *when his soul draweth near to the grave,*

And his life to the destroyers.

מַמְתִּים
Mortificanti-
bus. Mont:

The Hebrew is, *to those that kill, or to life destroyers*. There is a difference among Interpreters, who are here intended by these Destroyers, to whom the sickmans life draweth near, or who are these *life destroyers*.

First, some thus, *his life to the destroyers*, that is, to his enemies that are ready to destroy him. But that's improper to the text, which speaking of sickness cannot intend any destroying enemy but the last enemy which is to be destroyed, *death*, or the antecedents and usuall attendants of it, sicknesses.

Ad Angelos
morti praefectos
non incommode
refertur sequen-
tis versiculi ra-
tione habita, u-
bi Angeli vi-
tam annuncian-
tis unius de
mille mentio-
nem facit, ut
מַמְתִּים in-
telligas mortis
nuncios. Merc:

Secondly, by the destroyers others understand, *Angells*, who are commission'd and sent of God to cut the thread of life, and to take mortalls out of this world by mortall diseases ; and so the destroying Angell in this verse stands in opposition to that comforting Angell spoken of in the next verse ; *if there be a messenger or an Angell, &c.* That Angells have such a Ministry, is clear, (2 Sam. 24. 16.) Where (*David* having chosen to fall into the hands of God) an Angell is presently dispatcht to doe execution upon his people. *And when the Angell stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the Lord repented him of the evill, and said to the Angell that destroyed the people, it is enough, stay now thine hand, &c.* That destroyer (so he is called, *Exod. 12. 23.*) who slew all the first borne of the *Egyptians* (Gods last and greatest plague upon them, his tenth plague) is by most interpreted to be an Angell, yea by some a good Angell, because appointed and

and directed by God to spare his people the Jewes, and to poure out his vengeance upon the *Egyptians*, his and their enemies. For most usually the wicked are plagued by good Angells, and the good, as *Job* in this book was, are afflicted by evill Angells. Howbeit that text say some (*Psal. 78. 49.*) leadeth us rather to believe that it was an evill Angell ; *He cast upon them* (meaning the *Egyptians*) *the fiercenesse of his anger, wrath, indignation, and trouble, by sending evill Angells among them.* Yet possibly those Angells which destroyed the *Egyptians*, are called evill Angells, not because they were so in their nature, but because they were Ministers of evill to that hard-hearted people. Which way soever we take it, there is a truth in it applicable to the Scripture here in hand. And so some expound that of *Solomon* (*Prov. 17. 11.*) *An evill man seeketh only rebellion, therefore a cruell Messenger shall be sent against him.* The text may be rendred *a cruell Angell*, that is, an Angell with a Message of wrath and destruction shall be sent unto him ; The Apostle (*1 Cor. 10. 10.*) speaking of those dreadfull judgments, which God sent upon his people the Jewes in the Wildernesse (such as we are like to find in these Gospell times, if we provoke him, for all those things are said to have happened unto them for Types or examples (*vers. 11.*) And there he gives us warning, *neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.* That is, by the Pestilence or Plague (as 'tis expressed, *Numb. 14. 12, 37.*) which the Apostle *Paul* calleth a *destroyer*, because, doubtless it was executed by some invisable destroyer, or Angell. The Devill, whom *John* in the *Revelation* (*Chap. 9. 11.*) calleth, *the Angell of the bottomlesse pit*, is there also set forth by this Title, *whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.* The Devill is the *Apollyon*, the *Abaddon*, both which signifie a destroyer ; yea the Devill (*Heb. 2. 14.*) is said to have the power of death, as if he were set over that sad work, and Lorded it over dying men ; yet (let us know to our comfort) the Devill hath not the power of death as a Lord, or Judge, but only as an Executioner ; thus the sick mans life may be said to draw nigh to the destroyer, that is to the destroying Angell, or to the messenger of death.

Thirdly, we may take the *destroyers*, not for persons sent to destroy, but for diseases, and sicknesses ; these are destroyers. And

Præstat gene-
rale est et ad
omnia mortis
signa et morti-
fera, quicquid
illud sit reserve.
Merc:

thus it may be said of a sick man, *his life draweth nigh to the destroyers*, that is, he is in the hand or under the power of such dis-eases, as probably will destroy him. That seems to be Mr. Brough-
tons understanding of the words, who renders, *his soul draweth nigh to the grave, and his life to killing maladies*. Whatsoever is a death-bringer, whatever is deadly or mortall to man, may be comprehended under this expression, *The Destroyers*. And so, these words, *His life draweth nigh to the destroyer*, may signifie only thus much, he is deadly, or (as we commonly expresse it) mortally sick. There's no hopes of him, he is past recovery, the Physicians have given him over. *Heman* (*Psal.* 88. 3, 4, 5.) speaks to this sence and near in this language of himself. *My soul is full of troubles: my life draweth nigh unto the grave. I am counted with them that goe down into the pit: I am as a man that hath no strength. Free among the dead, like the slaine that lye in the grave whom thou remembrest no more.* *Heman* was alive, yet with respect either to the anguish of his soul, or the pains of his body, he looked upon himself as one free among the dead, that is, as a dead man, *his life drew near to the destroyers*. And hence

Fourthly, Others read the words not in an active sence, (as we) *Destroyers*, but in a passive, *His life draweth nigh to those who are destroyed or dead*. Dying men are so neere to, that they may be reckoned as *dead men*. That word of encouragement in the Prophet (*Isa.* 41. 14.) Which we render, *Feare not thou worme Jacob, and ye men* (or as we put in the Margin *Few men*) of *Israel*, is rendred by some others, *Feare not thou worme Jacob, and ye that are dead of Israel*, that is, who are (in your owne fearefull apprehensions or in the opinion of your proud and pre-potent enemies) as dead men, or nigh unto death; or (as we may expound it by that of *Paul* concerning himselfe and his Fellow-Apostles, with respect to the continuall hazzard of their lives *1 Cor.* 4. 9.) men, as it were, appoynted unto death; yea, as the learned in the Hebrew language tell us, the word translated in the Prophet *men*, with the change but of one poynt, and that only in the position of it, signifieth properly, *dead men*. We find the word applyed specially to wicked worldly men- (*Psal.* 17. 14.) who are there called *the hand of God* (to afflict or take away the lives of Godly men) and are sayd to *have their portion in this life*; the word, I say, is applyed to them, as implying, that how much soever:

וְיָמֵינוּ אֶתְּמִינָה
hæc vox ex eo
nata videtur,
quod sumus mor-
ti subjeti; Ita
et a Græcis
ῥεῖρα; et à la-
tina mortali-
usurpatus.
Martyn:

soever they rejoyce, either in the present enjoyments of this naturall life, or in the hopes of a long naturall life in this world, yet they alwayes are within one poynt (or pricke with a pen which is the shortest imaginable space) of death. In which sense also St Paul speaking of the different state of the body now in this life and after the resurrection from the dead, saith (1 Cor: 15. 54.) *When this mortall shall have put on immortality*; that is, when we, who now live in dying bodyes, or in bodyes bearing the marks or tokens of death, and looking like dead men, shall have put on the beautifull and glorious robes of immortality, *Then shall be brought to passe the saying that is written, Death shall be swallowed up in victory.* Whereas now death which is ready enough to get the victory over healthy and strong men, is so ready to get the victory over weake and sicke men, that their life may very well be sayd (according to this fourth and last interpretation) *to draw nigh to the destroyed, or those that are already dead.* Thus if in stead of Death-Bringers or destroyers we read Destroyed or those that have been brought to death, the meaning of *Elihu* in this passage is plaine and easie; importing the sicke man so sicke; that there is scarce a step or but a poynt between him and those who are actually dead.

But whether we take the word in this passive sence, and translate *The Destroyed*, or in the active, as we, and translate *destroyers*, thereby understanding either Angels in speciall, or diseases in Generall sent by God to destroy or take away the life of the sicke man; which way soever of these, I say, we expound the word, it yeilds a cleare sence as to the scope of the text, and as to the truth of it, (upon the matter) the very same. *His life draweth nigh to the destroyers.*

Hence note.

First, *Diseases are destroyers.*

Either they themselves destroy when they come, or the destroyer comes with them. (*Psal: 90. 3.*) *Thou turnest man to destruction and sayest, returne ye children of men.* 'Tis a Psalm penned by *Moses* lamenting the frailty of mankind. He lived to see all *Israel*, whom under his hand and conduct God brought out of *Egypt*, dye, except that renowned two, *Caleb* and *Joshua*; And therefore he having seene the great destruction of that people:

ple for their murmurings and unbeliefe, for their ten-fold provocations in the wilderness, might say from his owne experience more then most men to that poynt of mans mortality. And as God turned that people to destruction, and sayd according to that irrevocable sentence (*Gen: 3. 19.*) *Returne ye children of men to your originall and first materiall, dust* ; so he saith the same to men every day, who as they are dust, so we see them returning to their dust. Every disease, if so commission'd by God, is death, and every paine (if he say it) the period of our lives.

Againe, *Elihu* is here speaking of a man whom the Lord is but trying, teaching, and instructing upon his sick bed ; yet he saith, *His soule is drawing neere to the grave, and his life to the destroyers.*

Hence observe.

Those afflictions which are but for instruction, may looke like those which are for destruction.

When the Lord hath a purpose only to try a man, he often acts towards him as if he would kill him. If any shall say, this is hard, I answer ; *A ruffe horse must have a ruffe rider.* Ruffe wood will not cleave without a beetle and wedges. We put God to use extremities, that he may bring us to a moderation. Our spirits are often so ruffe and head-strong, that they must be kept in with bit and bridle ; they are so tough and knotty that there's no working, no cleaving of them till the Lord sets his wedges to us, and layes on with his beetle of heaviest and hardest afflictions ; In a word, we even compell him to bring us to deaths-doore, that he may teach us to live.

Now seeing paines and sicknesses (of which *Elihu* speakes as the way and meanes by which God speakes to sinfull man) are accompanied with such dreadfull symptomes and effects, loathing and losse of appetite, consumption of the flesh, and the breaking of the bones, the soule drawing neere to the grave, and life to the destroyers ; seeing I say, there are such sad effects of sickness, remember,

First, *Health is worth the praying to God for.*

Secondly, *Health is worth the praising of God for* ; and that considered, either, first, as continued, or, secondly, as restored. 'Tis a mercy not to be pained, not to be sicke ; 'tis a more sensible

ble, though not a greater mercy to be freed from paine, and recovered out of sickness. While we are kept free from paines and sicknesses, how thankfull should we be ; and when we are freed from and brought out of the bonds of bodily paine and sicknesses, how soule-sicke, yea how dead are we if we are not thankfull !

Thirdly, Seeing paines and sicknesses are such sad afflictions ; be wise and carefull for the preservation of your health ; doe not throw away your health upon a lust, doe not expose your selves to lasting paines and pining sicknesses, for the satisfying of a wanton sensuall appetite. The health and strength of this frayle body, are of more value then ten thousand of those vanishing delights. Yet how many are there, who run themselves to the graves mouth, and into the thickest throngs of those destroyers, for the raking up of such pitifull and perishing delights ? who to please their flesh for a few moments in surfeiting, drunkenness, and wantonness, bring many dayes, yea moneths and yeares of paine and torment upon their flesh ? yea, and not only shorten (I meane as to what they might probably have had by the course of nature) the number of their dayes, but suddenly end & extinguish them. It hath been sayd of old, *Gluttony kills more men then the sword* ; that is, it casts them into killing diseases. 'Tis a *maxime* in warre ; *Starve your enemy if you can rather then fight him ; cut his throat without a knife, destroy him without drawing a sword* ; that is, with hunger. Some are indeed destroyed with hunger, and hunger, if not relieved, will destroy any man ! Yet surfeiting destroyeth more then hunger, and 'tis a more quicke and speedy destroyer. We have knowne many who have cut their owne throats, by cutting too much and too fast for their bellies ; Pampering the Body destroyeth more bodies then starving. Many while they draw nigh to their Tables, their soules (as *Elihu* here saith) *are drawing neere to the grave, and their life to the destroyers*. Therefore, remember and consider, O ye that are men given to appetite, (as *Solomon* calleth such, *Pro: 23. 2.*) or rather as the Hebrew elegancy there hath it, *ye that are Masters of appetite*, studying your Bellies, till indeed ye are mastered by appetite, to you, I say, remember and consider, *Health is more then meate, and life then dainty faire*. All the content that intemperance can give you, cannot recompence you for the paines that sickness will give you ;

you

you may have pleasure for an houre or two, and sickness for a moneth or two, for a yeare or two. And if all the pleasure we take in satisfying that which though it may be gluttoned, yet will not be satisfied, a lust cannot recompence the paines that are found in a sick bed for a few dayes, moneths or yeares, how will it recompence any for those everlasting paines that are found in hell, where the damned shall be alwayes conversing with death and destruction, and yet never dye nor be destroyed.

Fourthly, Forasmuch as sickness is often accompanied with such grievous dolours and racking tortures, let the sick pray much that they may be armed with patience; who knows what tryalls and extremities sickness may bring him to? Though the beginnings and first appearances of it are but small, like the cloud which first appeared to the servant of *Elijah*, onely of a hands-breadth, yea though it begin but with the little finger of the hand, yet as that little cloud did the whole face of the heaven, so this little distemper may over-spread the whole body, and put you to the exercise of all your patience: it may hang and encrease upon you, till it hath broken your bones, and consumed your flesh, and brought you to the graves mouth, therefore pray for patience.

Lastly, Let not the strong man glory in his strength, nor the healthy man in his health; sickness may come shortly, and then how strong soever any man is, downe he must, and lye by it. There's no wrestling away sickness any way (if God send it and bid it come) but by wrestling with God (as *Jacob* did, *Gen.* 32.) in prayer. If you thinke to wrestle away bodily sickness by bodily strength and striving with it, you will be throwne and get the fall. Who can stand before a seaver, or a consumption, when they arrest us in the name of the Great King, and carry us prisoners to our beds? Therefore let no man glory in his strength, if any man doe, it shewes at present his morall weakness; and his naturall weakness may quickly teach him another lesson, and spoyle his glorying.

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 23, 24, 25, 26.

If there be a messenger with him, an interpreter, one among a thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness:

Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom.

His flesh shall be fresher then a childes : he shall return to the dayes of his youth.

He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy : for he will render to man his righteousness.

THese words hold forth the third way by which God speaks or reveales himselfe to man, and recovers him out of his sin. As if Elihu had said ; *When God hath brought a man to his sick bed, and he yet continueth in his blindness, not perceiving either his owne error, or the purpose and intention of God to him ; If then besides all this God so order the matter, that in his mercifull providence he provideth for his further instruction, and sends a speciall messenger (as he doth me to thee) an interpreter (which is a singular favour of God) to explain, and expound the meaning of his dealings with him, and what his owne condition is, to bring him to a true sight and sence of his sin, and to set him upright in the sight of God, by the aſtings of faith and repentance ; this soone altereth the case, and hereupon God is presently appeased towards him. Then he is gracious, and then many blessed fruits and effects of his grace doe follow, and are heaped on him. Here, therefore, we have a very illustrious instance of Gods loving kindness to poore sinfull man, recovering and fetching him backe (when he is as it were halfe dead) from the gates of death, restoring him both as to soule and body, putting him into a perfect (so farre as on this side heaven it may be called perfect) state, and giving him indeed what he can reasonably desire of him. In the context of these foure verses, Consider*

First, The instrument, or meanes by which God brings this about, and that is, by sending a messenger, or a choice interpreter to the sick mans bed, to counsel and advise him. *Vers. 23. If there be a messenger with him, &c.*

Secondly, We have here the motive, or first moving cause of this mercy, that is, the grace or free favour of God, *then he will be gracious unto him*; and saith, *Deliver him from going downe to the pit*, that is, being gracious he will give forth this word for his deliverance. *Then he is gracious to him, &c. (v. 24.)*

Thirdly, We have here the meritorious Cause of this mercifull deliverance; and that is a ransom; *I have found a ransom*, at the latter end of the 24th verse.

Fourthly, We have the speciall benefits of this deliverance, which are two-fold.

First, Respecting his body; *He is delivered from the pit of death (v. 24.)* And not only so, but he hath a life as new as when he began to live; *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes; the dayes of youth shall returne to him againe, (v. 25.)*

Secondly, We have the benefit respecting his soule, *(v. 26.) He shall pray, and God shall be favourable to him, and he shall see his face with joy; for he will render to man his righteousness.*

Thus you have the parts and purpose of these words; I shall now proceed to the particulars.

If there be a messenger with him.

Hypothetica
locutio signifi-
cat libertatem
dei in conferen-
do hoc benefi-
cio. Indicatio
venit in qui-
bus deus vult.
Coc
787 inde
787D missus
legatus nunci-
us.

These words are Hypotheticall, or by way of supposition; *if there be*: noting, that it is not alwayes so, every one hath not this mercy to have a messenger sent him; it's a speciall priviledge granted by God to some; *If there be*

A messenger.

What or who is this messenger? The word in the Hebrew hath a three-fold signification; all which are insisted upon by interpreters upon this place.

First, It signifieth an *Angel*; Now, Angels properly taken are spirituall or incorporeall substances, whose both office and high dignity it is to attend about the throne of God, and to be sent forth upon his speciall service (*Psal: 103. 20.*) *Bless the Lord ye his Angels that excell in strength, that doe his commandements,*
and

and hearken to the voice of his word. God hath thousand thousands of these servants ministering to him, and ten thousand times ten thousand standing before him (Dan: 7. 10.)

Some stay upon this exposition, affirming that here we are to understand an Angel by nature ; And hereupon ground the ministering of Angels to those who are either sick in body, or troubled in mind. Yea the Popish writers would hence prove the intercession of Angels for man, and mans invocation of Angels ; but though the exposition be granted, yet it yeilds no ground for this Inference. For what though God should send an Angel to instruct and comfort a sick man, will it therefore follow that the sick man should pray to him, and so give him the honour which is due to God ?

Secondly, The word is applyed in particular to Jesus Christ the uncreated Angel, or the creating Angel, the Lord of Angels, who, by way of eminency is called, The Angel of his presence, (Isa: 63. 9.) and the (Angel or) messenger of the Covenant, (Mal: 3. 1.) He also was that Angel of whom the Lord spake to the children of Israel (Exod: 23. 20.) saying, Behold I send an Angel before thee, to keepe thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions (if you persist in them) for my name is in him, that is, he is of the same nature with my selfe, and with that nature he hath my name, Jehovah. Thus some carry it here, as if Elihu specially intended the ministration of Jesus Christ, the Angel of the Covenant, to the sick sinner, for his restoring both as to the health of soule and body. 'Tis true, Jesus Christ is the great Angel, or messenger, and he primarily and chiefly doth all the business for poore sinners ; he is the messenger sent from God, and he is the interpreter of the mind of God, he came from the bosom of the father, and reveals the mysteries of heaven to us by his holy Spirit. He indeed is the one of a thousand, the chiefest of ten thousand, to shew unto man his uprightness. Yet, I conceive, that in this place, not the Lord of Angels alone, but some Angel of the Lord is also intended. And therefore,

Thirdly, The word *Angel* is applyable to every Messenger ; The Scripture gives it first to those that are sent by men about any errand or business (1 Sam: 23. 27.) But there came a messenger

Vides quam clare hoc loco Elihu de Christo con. ionetur ; per quem omnis conscientia, quantumcung; per legem occisa vivificatur per quem omnis crux vita et liberationis initium est.

Brents

unto Saul, saying, *hast thee and come*; for the Philistims have invaded the land. We read of an evill messenger (*Pro: 13. 17.*) who is either such a one as brings an evill message, or is himselfe evill (*Isa: 14. 32.*) *What shall one then answer to the messengers of the Nation, the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poore of his people shall trust in it.* And as it notes a messenger first by man, to a messenger sent by God. The ancient Prophets were in this sence the Angells of God, his messengers, and so are the Ministers of the Gospel at this day. The Epistles to the seaven Churches, are all directed to the *Angells of the Churches*, that is, to the severall Pastors or Ministers of the Churches respectively. And thus we may conclude, that by the messenger in this text, we are to understand any faithfull Minister of Christ, sent to convince, convert, or comfort a sick troubled soule. And, as was intimated before, we may very well gather up both these latter interpretations into one, that which applyeth it to Christ, and that which applyeth it to the Ministers of Christ. For so we have here both the author and the instrument of this comfort to the sick man. *Jesus Christ is the chiefe messenger and comforter of poore sinners*; and the Ministers of the Gospel are instruments in his hand, sent out by him for the perfecting of that worke. The word is applied to both, (*Ma: 3. 1.*) *Behold, I will send my messenger (or, my Angel) and he shall prepare the way before me.* John the Baptist was Christs messenger, as Christ himselfe (an infallible interpreter) assureth us (*Math: 11. 10.*) And presently it follows, *The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his Temple, even the messenger of the Covenant, whom ye delight in*; Behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. In the first part of the verse, John is called the Lords messenger, and in the latter part Christ is called the Lords messenger. Both were messengers, yet with a mighty difference; and therefore John the messenger of Christ, saith of Christ the messenger, (*Math: 3. 11.*) *He that cometh after me is mightier then I, whose shoes I am not worthy to beare.* And againe (*John 1. 26.*) *He it is that coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoes I latched I am not worthy to unloose.* If there be a messenger.

Hence note.

First, *The Ministers of Christ are the messengers of Christ.*

Christ is the fathers messenger, and they are messengers sent out

Nuncius est
propheta ali-
quis seu doctor
a deo missus.
Risc:

out by Christ. *As my father hath sent me, so send I you*, said Christ to his *Apostles* (*John* 20. 21.) And though that Title of *Apostle*, which signifieth *One sent*, or a *Messenger*, be most properly attributed to those, who were immediately called and inspired by Christ, yet in an allayed sence it may be applyed, commodiously enough, to any true Minister of the Gospel, for he also is sent ; he hath both his mission and commission mediately from Christ.

Yea the word *Apostle* is applyed in common to all or any that are sent upon businels (*John* 13. 16.) *He that is sent* (let him be who he will or upon what occasion soever he is sent) *is not greater then he that sends him.*

Apostolus hic non specialis muneris, sed generale nomen est, missum cum mandatis significans.
Grot:

So then, the Ministers of the Gospel are called the *messengers* of Christ ; First, Because they are sent by Christ, and have a Commission from him. Secondly , They are his *messengers* because they are instructed by Christ, and carry forth his mind : they may not speake their owne words, nor their owne sence, but the word which they bring, is or ought to be, what they have received, or what Christ hath put into their mouthes, that's their duty. And the messengers of Christ are to speak his mind:

First, Plainly (*1 Cor.* 2.4.) *In the demonstration of the Spirit.*

Secondly , boldly, not flattering the persons, nor fearing the faces of men. Thirdly, They should speak *authoritatively*, though they beseech; and beg, and pray, yet they are to doe all as having a warrant for what they doe, and as being cloathed with power from on high. *If any man speak* (saith the Apostle, *1 Pet.* 4. 11.) *let him speak as the Oracles of God.* As he is to speak *the Oracles of God*, so as the oracles of God. Some speak, who doe not speak the oracles of God, but their owne opinions. Others speak the oracles of God materially, that is, they deliver divine truths, yet they doe not speak them *as the oracles of God*, with that authority which becomes the Gospel ; we say of some, *They marre their tale in the telling* ; Though they report, or tell the mind of him that sent them, yet they spoyle it in reporting it ; The Ministers of the Gospel spoyle their message, unlesse they report it plainly, boldly, and with Authority.

Thirdly , If Ministers be the messengers of Christ, surely then, they are to be heard, and their message is to be received ; if God sends a messenger to us, shall we not open the doore to him ? if a friend send a messenger to us, he takes it very ill (and well : he

he may) if we doe not. 'Tis below civility, 'tis an high affront to a man not to receive his meſſage, what is it then to the moſt high God ! How dreadfull is that woe which Chriſt pronounceth againſt ſuch as reſuſe either his meſſengers, or their meſſage, (*Math. 10. 14, 15.*) *Whoſoever ſhall not receive you, nor heare your words ; When ye depart out of that houſe or City, ſhake off the duſt of your feete ;* Implying, that God would ſo ſhake them off, or eſteeme them no more then the vileſt duſt. Yea (as another Goſpel hath it (*Mark 6. 11.*) implying, that as they had not received the teſtimony which his meſſengers bare of him, ſo their duſt ſhould be kept as a teſtimony againſt them. And leſt the miſchiefe threatned them in this anigmatical or covert ſpeech ſhould not be underſtood, Chriſt himſelfe expounds it in the next words, *Verily, I ſay unto you, it ſhall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of Judgement, then for that City.*

Further, 'Tis not enough barely to receive Chriſts Meſſengers, they muſt be received as the Meſſengers of Chriſt. Such a reception the Apoſtle found among the *Galatians*, (*Chap. 4. 14.*) *And my temptation (or daily affliction) which was in my fleſh, ye deſpised not, nor rejected, but received me as an Angell of God, even as Chriſt Jeſus.* And what is ſaid of the Meſſenger, is to be underſtood alſo of his meſſage, both are to be received as from Chriſt. How is that, you will ſay ? Take it in theſe four words, Firſt, when 'tis received gladly, (*Acts 2. 4.*) It ſhould be the joy of our hearts (the *Psalmiſt* calls it the *joyfull ſound*, *Pl. 89. 15.*) to hear a word from Chriſt. Secondly, when it is received reverently, and reſpectfully, as giving honour to the meſſage and the Meſſenger for Chriſts ſake. Thirdly, when 'tis received obediently, as ſubmitting to the word ; elſe your reſpectfull, and joyfull receiving the meſſage of Chriſt is but a complement, or piece of Courtſhip. Fourthly, when their whole meſſage is thus received, as *Cornelius* ſaid to *Peter* (*Acts 10. 33.*) *We are all here preſent before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.* We muſt receive not only thoſe things that ſute us well, but thoſe things that are moſt croſſe to our corrupt natures and inereſts, whether of worldly profit or pleaſure ; this is to receive the Meſſengers and meſſages of Jeſus Chriſt, as his. *If there be a Meſſenger,*

An Interpreter.

That's a second stile, or Title given to the man sent to the sick sinner ; The Hebrew word here rendred an *Interpreter*, cometh from a root signifying sweetnesse, or to sweeten. Some conceive the Latine word (*Mel*) for honey hath its originall from it, because the message, or interpretation that comes from God should be sweet, as honey to us ; *David* professeth, *The word of God is sweeter then honey, and the hony-comb,* (*Psal. 19. 10.*) As if he had said, 'tis sweeter to the soul then that which is sweetest to sense. Now, the messenger sent from God, is called an *interpreter*, because he is sent to interpret and declare the mind of God to his people. Mr. *Broughton* renders, *A Teacher*. The word *interpreter* may be taken three wayes.

מליץ *dulcis*
inde מליץ
oratorem vel
interpretem
significat, quia
dicentis sermo-
nes dulces au-
ditoribus sunt.
Novari;

First, For any one that interpreteth tongues or languages. Thus 'tis said (*Gen. 42. 23.*) *Joseph spake to his brethren by an interpreter*, they ('tis like) did not understand the Egyptian language, and he either for state, or to conceale himself the better, would not seem to understand theirs.

Secondly, There is an interpreter of mysteries as well as of languages. Many things spoken in our own language may need an interpreter more then the words of a strange language. We read (*Prov. 1. 6.*) *of a Parable, and the interpretation of it.* Parables are wise, but hard and dark sayings, they need an interpreter. The Gospel is a mystery, and he that can expound and declare the mysteries of the Gospel is an *interpreter* indeed.

Thirdly, The word *interpreter* is taken in a larger sence, for any person that interposeth between two, or that indeavours the settling of any matter in difference, either between God and man, or between man and man ; (*Isa. 43. 27.*) *Thy Teachers* (we put in the Margin *interpreters*) *have transgressed against me.* As if he had said, they who as Mediators should have prayed for thee to me, and have declared my will to thee, are themselves depraved.

מליץ *corde*
est advocatus.
quem Chal-
dei vocant
פרקליטא
paracletum, sig-
nificat eadem.
voss oratorem
Rhetorom.
Drusi

Further, We may distinguish of a threefold interpreter. First, a grammaticall interpreter, whose business is to give the sence of words. Secondly, a logicall interpreter, who gathers up the meaning, scope and mind of any sentence, or the purpose of man in what he speaketh. Thirdly, there is the divine or spirituall inter-
preter,

preter, who labours to bring the truths of God, and the heart of man together. The Apostle having treated about prophesying, concludes (1 Cor. 14. 25.) *And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest, and so falling down on his face he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth;* as if the man that beleev- ed not, or one unlearned (for of such he speaks, vers. 24.) had said, *surely these men understand what is in my heart, for they have brought the truth of God, and my heart together, so that I must con- fesse God is in them, that is, there is a divine wisdom or interpreta- tion in them.* When *Elisha* saith, *If there be an interpreter,* we are to understand him in this last sence; not of one that can inter- pret words, like a Grammarian, or give the scope and sence of words like a Logician, but of one that hath a divine skill to bring the truths of God home to the heart of man, that is, to convince & informe an ignorant conscience, and to comfort, relieve and sup- port a troubled conscience. *If there be an interpreter,*

Hence note.

The Ministers of Christ are the interpreters of the mind and good will of God toward poor sinners.

They interpret the mind of God as to peace and reconciliati- on, as to grace and salvation, as well as to duty and holiness of conversation. 'Tis the nicest and hardest thing in the world to in- terpret the mind of God aright to a sinner, to bring his heart to a closing with the great truths, and promises of the Gospel; he that can doe this skilfully is worthy the name of an interpreter. The Apostle saith of him who is but a babe in Christ and useth milke (that is, lives upon the lower and more easie principles of faith) *he is unskillfull in the word of righteousness* (Heb. 5. 13.) that is, he knowes not how to make out and mannage for his own com- fort the doctrine of free grace through the alone righteousness of Jesus Christ. And therefore, as first, God himself is the author and fountaine of this grace; as secondly, Jesus Christ is the purcha- ser or procurer of the fruits of this grace to sinners; as thirdly, the effectuall worker of our hearts to receive this grace, as also the witness-bearer and sealer of it to our souls is the holy Spirit; as fourthly, the word of the Gospell is the Charter, and Covenant of this grace: so fifthly, the Ministers of Christ are the interpreters of this grace; and they are, or ought to be skillfull in this word of righte-

righteousness. Their skill and duty is first to explaine what the Covenant is, and rightly to lay down how the sinners reconciliati-on to God is wrought. Secondly, to make a sutable and seasona-ble application of it, or to bring it home to the souls and consci-ences of poor sinners, as they find their state to be. And as the Ministers of Christ are Gods interpreters to his people, so they are the peoples interpreters unto God. They are the former, two wayes ; First, by opening the mind of God to his people ; Se- condly, by urging and pressing them to receive it both for their direction and consolation. They are the latter four wayes : First, by laying open and spreading the peoples wants, and weakneses before God. Secondly, by confessing their sins, and transgressions to God. Thirdly, by intreating the Lord for them, or by praying for mercy, pardon, and forgiveness in their behalfe, for sins com- mitted. Fourthly, by giving thanks in their name for mercies re- ceived. Thus they are first, Gods mouth to the people in preach- ing & declaring the Gospel; Secondly, the peoples mouth to God in prayer and thanksgiving. And in both performe the worke and Office of an interpreter.

And if the Ministers of the Gospell are interpreters ; Then,

First, Every Minister must be acquainted with the mind of God. He must have skill in the mystery of the Gospel. How shall he be able to interpret the mind of God to sinners, who is not acquainted with the mind of God ? *We have the mind of Christ* (saith the Apostle of himselfe and his fellow-labourers in the Gospel (1 Cor. 2. 16.) and when he saith, we have the mind of Christ, his meaning is not only this, that they had the mind of Christ written in a book, but they had a cleare under- standing of it, and so were fitted to interpret it to others.

Secondly, As he must have the knowledge of the mystery, so he must have the tongue of the learned (Isa. 50. 4.) *That he may be able to speak a word in season to him that is weary* ; that is, to the wounded, and troubled in conscience ; This is the interpreter intended by *Elihu*. He is one that hath learned, and is taught of God. Humane learning, the knowledge of Arts, and Sciences, is good, and hath its use ; but divine learning, or learning in divine things, that is to be divinely learned, (tis possible for one to have learning in divine things, and not to be divinely learned) is absolutely necessary to make him an interpreter. It is not

enough to know divine things, but he must know them divinely, or by the unction and teachings of the Spirit. The Apostle *John* (*Rev. 10. 8.*) is commanded to eat the book; this eating of the book, signifieth the spirituall knowledge of divine truths; in this sence, we know no more then we eat, then we (as it were) turn into our own substance, that which is eaten becomes one with us; the mystery of the Gospell must be eaten by the interpreter of Gospell mysteries. A man cannot interpret the mind of God till he knows it; and he cannot know the mind of God, unless God himself reveals it; so the Apostle argueth (*1 Cor. 2. from 12, to 16.*) *As no man knoweth the mind of a man, but the spirit of a man that is in him, so the things of the spirit of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God, and he to whom the Spirit of God doth reveale them.* And therefore though a man may have an ability to interpret the word of God, as 'tis an excellent book, a book full of admirable knowledge, he may (I say) have an ability to interpret it soundly by humane learning, yet no man can doe it savingly and convertingly, but by the help of the Spirit. (*Psal. 25. 14.*) *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant;* he will shew it effectually, he will make them know it. Thus *David* prayed (*Psal. 119. 18.*) *Lord open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* Naturall parts and humane learning, arts and languages may give us an understanding of the renour and literal meaning of the Law of God; but none of these can open our eyes to behold the wonders of the Law, much lesse the wonders and mysteries of the Gospell. The opening of our eyes to behold these spirituall wonders is the Lords work, and it should be marvelous in our eyes. For this opening of the eye (and nothing without this) will make any man the most ignorant man among a thousand, *An Interpreter*

One among a thousand.

These words containe either a third higher Title, or the highest commendation of the former two. A messenger, an interpreter, even such a one as is *one among a thousand*; *One* is no number, and a *thousand* is put for the greatest number; then *one among a thousand*, or *one of a thousand*, implyeth that the one here spoken of is a very rare one; only he that is seldome seen, or found, is *one among a thousand*; *Solomon* saith (*Eccl. 7. 24.*) *One man among*

a thousand have I found, but a woman among all those have I not found. There were very few wise or good men among many when he found but one among a thousand. He might find men in great number, but the number of those that deserved to be called *men* was very small, so small, that he saith he found but *one* among a thousand. So that here when *Elihu* calls the interpreter *One among a thousand*, he teacheth us that such a messenger, such an interpreter is rarely to be had, or being had is a very rare and excellent one. 'Tis a proverbiall speech, with an hyperbole; to say of any man, he is *one among a thousand*; for though we are not to take it arithmetically or strictly, yet *one* being no number, must needs signifie very few, or the smallest number, and a *thousand* being the greatest whole number must needs signifie many, very many or a great number. And therefore to say of this interpreter, *he is one among a thousand*, must needs import, that even among a thousand men, we can hardly find one who hath a faculty or a competency for this office, or is fit to be honoured and adorned with this Title, *An interpreter*.

*Hi nuncii rari
sunt ita ut ex
mille homini-
bus, viz unus
reperiatur, qui
munere illo rec-
te fungi possit.
Pisc:*

Hence note.

True and faithfull interpreters of the mind of God are very rare.

He is a rare and choyce man that is pickt out of a thousand men. The faithfull messengers and interpreters of the mind of Christ, are rare under a twofold notion; First, as being precious and of great worth and use. Such are the light of the world, and the salt of the earth; The minds of all men would be darke, and their manners corrupt, if God did not send out these interpreters to inlighten and to season them. Secondly, they are rare as not being every where to be had or met with; what is hardly had is highly prized. It is said (*1 Sam. 3. 1.*) *The word of God was precious in those dayes*, why so? the reason is added, *there was no open vision*, there were not such frequent manifestations of the mind of God, as had been formerly; there were few Prophets few Interpreters to be found in those dayes. The true and faithfull messengers or interpreters of the mind of God, are rare at all times, in what numbers soever they appear, though they come like an Army by thousands, though (as is said, *Psal. 68. 11.*) *God giving the word great be the company* (we put in the Margin *Army*) of those

those that publish it, or (as the old translation hath it) *great be the Company of the Preachers*. They are rare, also, because not to be had at some times and in many places. Look over the times or ages of the world, and you will find some of them were dark times, dayes of ignorance, there were few interpreters; look at any time or at this time over many parts and places of the world, and you shall find such interpreters are not to be found in the greatest part, in the most places of it. Not one to be had in some whole countries and huge tracts of the earth. Goe to all the Heathen and Mahometan nations, and you shall not find one of these messengers, or interpreters; goe to *Greece*, which anciently engrossed all knowledge, and was famous for all sorts of learning, yet an interpreter is scarcely to be found there in these dayes. Goe to the popish nations, though they bear the name of Christ, and abound with learned men, men learned in the knowledg not onely of common Arts and Sciences, but in divinity and the Scriptures; yet in the sence here spoken of they have not many interpreters, the most being such as pervert and wrest the Scriptures, and lead the people into errour; rather the messengers of Antichrist, then of Christ; Satans emissaries, then Gods interpreters. So then, if we consider, that severall parts and countries of the world are quite without, they have none, and others are filled with false teachers & interpreters of the word of God, which are worse then none, we must conclude an interpreter *is one of a thousand*.

Again, If we turne our eyes to those parts of the world, where there are many sound, orthodox, faithfull messengers and interpreters of the word of God (with which blessing this nation (above many, if I say not above all) hath been crowned for a hundred years together; *England* as *Jerusalem* of old (*Isa. 21. 1.*) may well be called *a valley of vision, a seminary of seers*, because of that abundance and variety of visions and divine revelations which God hath stored us with in these latter ages) yet (I say) even here as in all other the best reformed Protestant Churches and christian nations, an interpreter may be called *one of a thousand*; and that in a twofold reference.

- First, If we consider, the whole body of any reformed nation, Ministers are but few compared to all the people, they are hardly so much as one of a thousand, throughout that whole nation; there are but few who give themselves up to the work of the Ministry.

nistry. Few that dedicate themselves to Christs service in publishing the Gospel, for the saving of souls ; there is (I say) but one of a thousand that is dedicated to that work.

For First, Most are unwilling to meddle with that calling, because of the laboriousness of it, interpreters are they who labour in the word and doctrine, and not only so, but they must give a strict account to Christ of their labours. Some good men have declined the ministry, being terrified both with the weight of the work, and the strictness of the account, and doubtless (were we duely sensible) it might make the ablest Ministers tremble every hour of the day, to think what a burden of care and account lyeth upon them, who are set to watch over souls.

Secondly, Others will not enter into this calling, because as the labour is great, and the account strict, so the reward, as from man, is small ; it doth not lead to riches, and greatness in the World, comparatively with other callings ; though there be a comfortable competence allowed to the Ministers of the Gospel, yet there is not much of the world to be expected by them, yea they are charged not to look for much, or not to doe their worke *for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind* (1 Pet. 5. 2.)

Thirdly, As the reward is small, so the opposition is great, Ministers are often persecuted, and reproacht, and the more faithfull and dilligent they are, the more they are opposed and reproached. To preach the Gospel fully as it should be preacht, is to provoke thousands, and bring the World about our eares. No marvell then if the messengers and interpreters of it be not many, if they be but as one among a thousand. Thus you see what hinders the generallity of men from meddling with that work. 'Tis but one among a thousand that will engage in a work upon these hard termes, or that pre-apprehending them, hath faith and self-denyal enough to swallow and overcome them.

Againe, Consider those that outwardly bear the name and Title of the Ministers of Christ, and you will find that among them, they who are true and faithfull to their trust, are upon the matter, but one among a thousand. As there are but few Ministers among many men, so there are but few Ministers among many that are true and right interpreters. Doe but take out or sever these five sorts from among them who pretend to be Ministers, and then it will soone appear that the interpreters in truth are but few among many of those that are so in Title.

First,

First, Take away all those, who thrust themselves boldly, or are admitted carelessly, or by mistake into the Ministry, who yet are ignorant, blind, ungifted, and so unable for the worke.

Secondly, Take away those, who though they have gifts and abilities; yet are lazie, and sloathfull, such as will not take paines nor worke in the worke.

Thirdly, Take away those, who have gifts, and are industrious, yet are unsound (at least in many poynts) and erroneous in their judgements, and so mis-lead and mis-guide those, whose guides and leaders they are.

Fourthly, Take away those, who though they are not unsound, and erroneous, yet are prophane, and scandalous; pulling downe that truth with one hand which they have set up with another, or building againe those sins by their practise, which they have destroyed by preaching, and so make themselves (as the Apostle speakes in a like case, *Gal: 2. 18.*) *transgressours*; for as God justly calls such *transgressours*, because they have sinned against his word, so they make themselves *transgressours*, because they sin against their owne; even against the doctrine by which they have condemned those sins, which themselves live in.

Fifthly, Take away those, who though they are neither of these, neither ignorant, nor idle, nor unsound, nor scandalous, yet are but meere formall preachers, such as only speake words, deliver the out-side, and skin of the Gospel, but have no acquaintance with the marrow and power of it. Take away these five sorts from among Ministers, and surely this expression of *Elihu* will be but too much verified, *The interpreter is but one among a thousand.* Abstract all that are ignorant, idle, unsound, scandalous, formall dispensers of the word, from those who are commonly called Ministers; and then, they who remaine will be very few, so few, that every one of them, may be reckoned, *one among a thousand.* And we shall be forced to say, that *Elihu* hath not sayd without cause, whether we respect their excellency or their scarcity, that any faithfull messenger or interpreter *is one among a thousand.*

This is not spoken by *Elihu* here, nor ought it to be taken up by any of the most faithfull Ministers of Christ, to draw honour and respect upon themselves, or that their persons may be had in admiration who are faithfull; this were a pittifull designe of holding

out such a truth; but it serves for this end, that the people of God may see, they have a blessing where any are faithfull; and may learne how they ought to prize those faithfull messengers, whom the Lord sends among them, yea how readily they should receive the grace of God which is rendred in their ministry. These are not only each of them, *one messenger*, or *interpreter*, but *each one of them is one of a thousand*. A soule-convincing, converting, quickning, comforting Minister of the Gospel is worth thousands, and *one among a thousand*. The Prophet saith (*Isa. 52. 7.*) *How beautifull are the feet of them that bring glad tideings, &c.* By their feet he meaneth their *coming*, feete being the instruments of their coming to bring this glad tideings; yet when he saith, *their feete are beautifull*, it may have a greater emphasie, for (the feete being the lowest part of the structure of mans body) it may intend thus much, that even that which is lowest and meanest in a messenger of the Gospel, his feete wearied and wet, yea foule and dirty with travel, have a beauty upon them; how much more his face and countenance; for if the very feete of such news-bringers, of such messengers, and interpreters, should be acceptable and lovely (so beauty is) to all men, how much more should their persons and most of all their message and tideings be? And doubtlesse, if men did but understand it, they would acknowledge, that God hath committed such a treasury to them, as is better and more beautifull, then all the gold and precious things of this world, and would cry out, O what a mercy is it to have such a News-bringer? and what Greedy News-mongers would they be? The *one among a thousand* would be more desirable then many thousands of Gold and Silver.

Elihu having described the person, whom the Lord often makes instrumentall for the restoring and comforting of the sick sinner, calling him *A messenger, an interpreter, one of a thousand* (which latter may be applicable to both the former) proceeds to shew the business of this messenger, or interpreter, who is *one of a thousand*, more expressely, or to set out what his worke is, surely excellent, and glorious worke, even this

To shew unto man his uprightness.

We are not to understand this shewing for a bare report of the thing; in which sense the Prophet complain'd; *Lord who hath believed!*

believed our report! (Isa: 53. 1.) that is, we have shewed good things to the world, but who hath believed us? The *shewing* spoken of by *Elihu*, is not a bare declaration of the matter to the eare, but an effectuall, and powerfull impression of it upon the heart. Such a shewing as is spoken of at the 16th verse of this Chapter, *then he openeth the eares of men*; The Lord speakes so by his messengers, and interpreters, that he not only makes the eare heare, but the heart too. The heart heares when we have a sense, and are under the power of what is heard. As before we had a spirituall interpreter, so here we have a spirituall shewing of his interpretation. Here's a heavenly messenger, and a heavenly message to the *earthly man*; *To tell the earthly his rightfullness*, saith Mr Broughton.

Now, because of the pronoun, [*his*] *his uprightness*; It may be demanded whose uprightness he meanes? or, what this uprightness is, which the interpreter sheweth.

First, Some expound it of Gods uprightness, and then the sense runs thus; God sendeth an Interpreter to *shew unto man his uprightness*, that is, his own right and just dealing with man; As if *Elihu* had sayd, Gods messenger shall convince this troubled man that God doth not wrong him, how much soever he doth afflict him, or that God is upright and faithfull in his dealing with him. This *David* acknowledged (*Psal: 119. 75.*) *In faithfullness thou hast afflicted me*; that's a good sense of the words, and very surable to the purpose of *Elihu*, who was about to convince *Job* that his complainings were very sinfull and uncomely, seeing God neither had nor would, nor, indeed, could doe him any wrong. God is faithfull, just, and right, yea, God is good and mercifull to man, when he corrects him sore. Mr Broughton gives this interpretation of his own translation; *To tell the earthly his rightfullness*, that is, *God his mercy*. The uprightness of God is that by which he doth righteous things. This uprightness of God consists not only in his holiness, in his love of that which is good, and in his hatred of evill, but also in his preservation of man according to his word of promise. 'Tis the righteousness of God, that through the death and intercession of his Son, he should save and heale the believing and repenting sick sinner.

Secondly, And more clearly (as I conceive) to the present scope of this place; the Antecedent to *His*, is the sick man; And then,

Æquitatem illius. i. e. dei, qua omnia et nominatim ipsos laborantes regit et gubernat. Jun:

then, to shew unto man his uprightness, is to shew him his owne uprightness.

But you will say ; Is the messenger or interpreter, only to tell man how good he is, and what good he hath done ? and so to flatter him into a good opinion of himselfe, or of his owne good deeds ?

I answer ; This *shewing unto man his uprightness*, may be taken

First, As implying the mans ignorance of that uprightness which he hath ; or that he hath an uprightness, but doth not know nor understand that he hath it. 'Tis so sometimes with the sound godly man, as well as with the sicke, when (though in bodyly health, yet) he is discomposed and troubled in mind ; For then though he hath an uprightness of heart, an integrity towards God, or (as *Job* speaks of himselfe) *the root of the matter in him* ; that is, though he be truly converted and really godly, yet he seeth it not, such temptations of Satan and troubles of mind assault him, such clouds of doubt, and darkness are upon him, that he is not able to make out his owne state. In this case the faithfull messenger or interpreter coming to him, and inquiring how it is with him, picks out this from him, that there is an uprightness, and an integrity of heart in him towards God, and that his state is good, though he cannot discern it. For as the life and state of grace, is alwayes a secret to those who have it not ; so 'tis often a secret to those that have it. Some men, never, few men alwayes understand their own condition, and 'tis very hard to make them understand it. For as it is with many hypocrites, and with all presumptuous ones, you cannot beat them out of a good opinion of themselves ; though they are stark naught, rotten at heart, and have nothing to save themselves up with, but a little boldness and confidence, yet they will not be perswaded off from their false foundations, and deceitfull bottoms ; they will be good in their owne eyes, upright in their owne opinion, and doe not doubt but all's well with them, and will be well with them alwayes. Now, I say, as it is with some hypocrites, and all presumptuous ones, they thinke themselves to have an uprightness which they have not ; so many are upright and sincere, who see it not, and 'tis a very hard worke, the hardest worke that the Ministers of the Gospel have to make them understand and see their owne uprightness.

D d d

Secondly,

Secondly, The word *uprightness*, and the *ſhewing unto man* *his uprightness* here ſpoken of, takes in the whole duty, yea and the whole priviledge and intereſt of a Godly man, or that which will be his *uprightness* and ſet him right both before God and his owne conſcience. To ſhew unto man this his uprightness, is to ſhew him when he is right, and how he may be ſetled in a right ſtate; in ſuch a ſtate as will be to him like Mount *Sion* which cannot be removed. Thus the uprightness of man comprehends the whole buſineſs both of faith and repentance, or all that which a ſinner is called both to doe, and believe, for the repaying and mending of his loſt and ruin'd ſtate, for the putting and ſettleing him in ſuch a ſtate as the Lord may owne him as his, and be gracious to him. This, whatſoever it is, is mans uprightness or righteouſneſs, and the ſhewing unto man, this his uprightness is the bringing him word in the name of Chriſt, that God juſtifieth him from the guilt of all his ſins, and accepteth him into his favour.

Hence obſerve.

The great duty of the Miniſters of the Goſpel, is to cleare up to man, whether he be upright, or how he may ſtand upright with God.

This obſervation takes in both parts of the expoſition. To ſhew unto man how it is with him, what his preſent ſtate, and condition is, and to ſhew unto man what he ought to be, or how he may be in a ſafe condition, this is the worke of that meſſenger and interpreter who is one among a thouſand, this is a bleſſed worke, and thus it muſt be done.

Fiſt, Man is to be ſhewed *the uprightness* of his ſtate, or that which muſt be and be had to make up the uprightness of his ſtate, which is

Fiſt, His *fiſt-repentance*, or conversion to God. Fallen man can never come into a right ſtate, till he returne to God from whom he fell. A mans ſinfull ſtate is a crooked, perverſe, and wretched ſtate; repentance or returning to God, is the bringing of a man right againe, it brings him to his uprightness, even to that ſtate, wherein he was fiſt made; *Loe this have I found* (ſaith Solomon, Eccl: 7. 29.) *that God hath made man upright; but they have ſought out many inventions.* Solomon doth not diſcover the ſeverall branches and ſtreames of mans ſinfullneſs, but the roote and ſpring of it he doth, the corruption of his nature by the fall.

fall. For as he found that God made man upright; so mutable, subject to temptation, and as easily yeilding to the temptation, as admitting himselfe to be temptred: and so, not resting in that way and meanes of happines (as the Devil his tempter did not) which the wisdom and goodnes of God had chalked out and allotted to him, but conceiting to himselfe a higher perfection, he then began and still continueth to seeke out variety of meanes (called by *Solomon*, *many inventions*) as then to get more than he had, so now to regaine some shadow at least of what he had. These inventions, are all those carnall shifts; whereby man hopes either to palliate his sin, or to pacifie his conscience. But all prove vaine inventions; there being no possibility now, for man to get out of sin, or to goe back to God, and so to his first estate, but by repentance; That's Gods invention, and he hath concluded, that nothing without that shall bring man (the case of infants is another thing) to that state of uprightness, in which he was first made. And therefore the Apostle giving an account of his ministry, how he acted as a messenger, or an interpreter (He indeed was one among a thousand) saith (*Acts 20. 20, 21.*) *I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, &c. testifying both to the Jews, & also to the Greekes, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ,* which is

The second thing wherein this uprightness of mans state doth consist. These two, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, were the summe of all those Sermons in which *Paul* gave counsel both to Jewes and Gentiles what to doe that they might be saved. And this is the worke of all Gospel Ministers in shewing unto man his uprightness. He that is converted, and believeth, he that turneth from sin, and taketh hold of Jesus Christ by faith for righteousness, is in a better state of uprightness, then when he was first made upright. The Prophet (*Hab: 2. 4.*) speaking of faith, and that which is opposite to it selfe-confidence, useth this word, *Behold his soule which is lifted up* (namely in thoughts of any selfe or creature-sufficiency) *is not upright in him.* A proud soule is not an upright soule. What is pride? surely this, for a man to thinke himselfe in a good condition, or that he is well enough, that he wants nothing, as it is sayd of the Church of *Laodicea* (*Rev: 3. 17.*) when yet he is empty and guilty, poore and peny-lesse in spiritualls, wanting

every thing, eſpecially a ſight and ſence of his poverty and wants ; yet this is every mans thought of himſelfe, till he is ſhewed what is *indeed his uprightness*. The naturall mans ſpirit is lifted up, not to God nor in God by faith and repentance, but in himſelfe. *The ſoule thus lifted up is not upright* (ſaith the Prophet, and what ſaith he next ?) *But the juſt ſhall live by his faith*. As if he had ſayd : *The man that lives by faith, or the man that believes, and ſo lieth upon Chriſt, is upright and hath an uprightness which will hold him right*, which the uprightness of creation did not. Then the whole matter of mans uprightness was in himſelfe, and he was to ſtand upon his own bottom, having no promiſe of ſupport. But now the maine matter of mans uprightness is out of himſelfe, and beſides, himſelfe hath a promiſe to be ſupported in his uprightness. Man by the grace of repentance, turning from ſin, and by the grace of faith cloſing with the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, is ſet right in the Court of heaven, and ſhall be preſerved (in his uprightness) by the power of God through faith unto ſalvation.

Again, When man is ſhewed his uprightness as to his ſtate, which is his life of juſtification ; then he muſt alſo be ſhewed his uprightness as to his way or courſe of life in *ſanctification, or holineſſe of converſation*. The interpreter muſt not only bring man to Chriſt, but muſt tell him how he ought to walke in Chriſt. Man being ſet right, ought to goe right, or (as tis ſayd, *Pſal. 50. 23.*) *To order his converſation aright*. Mans uprightness in walking and working is an inſeparable fruit of his uprightness in Being.

Thirdly, The buſineſſe of the interpreter, is not only to bring the troubled ſoul to a true ſence of ſin, to a cleare ſight of Chriſt, and a ſutable converſation, but to furniſh him with weapons to reſiſt Satans temptations, to ſhew him how to mannage *the ſword of the Spirit, and the ſhield of faith, that he may be able to quench all the fiery darts of the Devill* ; as alſo to answer, reſolve, and remove the doubts and ſcruples, that may ariſe in or are upon his owne conſcience, and ſo to ſettle him in a ſweet and comfortable dependance upon Chriſt by faith as his uprightness and righteousneſſe, againſt all the feares which at any time aſſault his peace.

But ſome may ſay, Should not ſinners be ſhewed their un-uprightness or unrighteousneſſe, rather then their uprightness ?

I answer ; First, 'Tis a peice of our shewing man his uprightnes, to shew him that he hath no uprightnes. The Spirit convinceth, first, of sin, and then of righteousness (*John* 16. 8.) Secondly, I answer, a mans uprightnes (according to the meaning of this Scripture) cannot be shewed him, but he must also be shewed his unrighteousness. Thirdly, I answer, The sick man here spoken of, may be supposed a man troubled in mind about his sins ; and in that case the interpreters duty is to ease his mind by shewing him his uprightnes in the way opened, rather then to burden his mind further by shewing him his sin or unrighteousness. And therefore lastly,

To close this poynt with a word of caution ; When *Elihu* speakes of an uprightnes to be shewed the troubled soule ; 'Tis not, that the messenger who comes to relieve and comfort him, should use flattering words, and blow him up with a conceit of his owne good workes, and so tell him a story of his vertues or vertuous deeds. No, the uprightnes chiefly intended here is the righteousness of Christ, in and by which we are reconciled to and made one with God. Nor can we ever attaine to this till we are made sensible of our owne nothingness, till we are unhinged of selfe, and quite taken off from any bottoming upon our owne righteousness. Some, when they have trouble of conscience upon them, what doe they ? they fly to their owne righteousness ; And when they are sick, and ready to dye, how doe they prepare to stand right before God ? they confess they have sinned, and done amisse, but they hope they have repented, and made amends for that ; yea they can remember they have done such, and such, possibly, many good things, they have been just to all men, and charitable to the poore, they have heard the word, and been at many a good Sermon, they have prayed and fasted, &c. Thus they patch up the business, as if this were their *only* uprightnes ; whereas, indeed, their only uprightnes is the righteousness of Jesus Christ. We never see where our uprightnes is, till we see there is nothing that makes us stand upright in the court of heaven, but only Christ our righteousness. This is the great duty of the messengers, and interpreters of Christ, to declare to man this righteousness for his uprightnes. And that hence it is (as *Elihu* proceeds in the next verse to assure the sick man) that God is and will be gracious to him.

Vers. 24. *Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going downe into the pit, I have found a ran-some.*

These words hold out the generall issue and fruit of the labours and good counsell of that messenger or Interpreter dealing with the sick man, and shewing him his uprightness.

There are three distinct interpretations which run quite through this verse, and they arise from a different apprehension about the antecedent in this pronoun [*He*] *then he is gracious unto him.* He; who is that? All the Popish interpreters refer it to the *Guardian-Angel* sent to attend on this sick man; *Then he (the Angel) will be gracious, and he will say, deliver him.* But as I then layd by that opinion that the messenger was an Angel properly taken, so I shall not stay upon that which is a consequent of it, here.

Secondly, Several of our Protestant interpreters referre this *he*, to the Messenger or Interpreter, to the Prophet or any spiritually wise and holy man, sent of God to assist and help the sick man in his distresse. Some are so positive in this opinion, that they deny the text any other reference; *This is to be understood of the Messenger (saith one) and not of God. And I grant 'tis sutable to the business of the messenger who comes to comfort and instruct the sick man, that he should pitty and compassionate him in that disconsolate condition, and likewise pray for him, according to the tenour of these words in the text, or to the same effect; O Lord God, be gracious to him, and deliver him, let him not goe downe to the pit, for the ran-some sake which I have found. As if Elihu had sayd; When that faithfull messenger shall have declared the benefits and grace of God to the afflicted man, then pittying his afflicted soule, he shall pray for him; O God deliver him from death and condemnation, from the pit, and from destruction, for I have found and shewed him a ran-some, by which his soule may be delivered, and his sins pardoned.*

Hoc de nuncio dicitur non de deo; apte enim tribuitur nuncio et interpreti voluntatē dei ut misereatur hominibus in summo vitæ discrimine constituti.

Merl: Et de gratia eum alloquitur dixerit redime eum nec descedat in foveam expiatione (quam) invenit. Jun: Summa orationis quæ apud deum pro afflictis, habenda est. Jun:

In the 19th Chapter of this Booke at the 27th verse, *Job* useth this word in his application to his friends, for their pitty to him, and more favourable dealing with him; *Have pitty upon me, have pitty upon me, O my friends, for the hand of God hath touched me.* As if he had sayd, *The hand of God presseth me sore, O let not your hand*

hand be heavie upon me too. This exposition carrieth a great truth in it, and is not at all inconsistent with the letter of the text; yet I shall not insist upon it, but adhere rather to a third, which makes the antecedent to this [*He*] to be God himselfe.

Then he is gracious.

That is, when the messenger hath dealt with the sick man, when he hath opened his condition to him, and shewed him his uprightness, or how he may stand upright before God, or what his righteousness is before God, and hath brought his heart to an unfeigned sorrow for his sin, and to the actings of faith upon the promise; then God is gracious, and then he gives out the word for his restoring, and orders it to be presently dispatcht away to him; saying, *deliver him, unloose him, unbind him, let him not goe downe into the pit, I have found a ransom.* Taking this for the generall sense of the Text, I shall proceed to open the particulars.

Then he will be gracious, or then; *he will have mercy upon him,* as Mr Broughton translates. Then and not before; till then the Lord lets his bones ake, and his heart tremble, till then he suffers him to be brought so low that he is reckoned among the dead, but then, though not before, he sheweth himself gracious unto him. When a poor man is reduced to the utmost extremitie, then is Gods opportunity, then is the season of mercy; and the Lord therefore lets us be at the lowest, that we may be the more sensible of his goodness in raising and lifting us up: The Lord suffers many (as Paul spake of himself, (2 Cor. 1. 9.) *to have the sentence of death in themselves, that they may learn not to trust in themselves, but in him who raiseth the dead.* We seldom give God either the glory of his power by trusting him, or of his goodness by thanking him for our deliverances, till we are brought to the last cast (as we say) or to such an exigent as leaves no visible meanes in probability, no nor of possibility to escape. And when 'tis thus with us, *then he is gracious.*

Secondly, *Then he is gracious,* that is, when the man is doubly humbled, when the mans heart is graciously broken, when the man is growne into an abhorrence of himself and of his sin, or loathes himself for his sin, as much as he loathed his meat; as 'tis said in the former verse; when his heart is thus taken quite off from all that is below in the world, and gathered up beleevingly

Miseru,
gratificatus,
gratia prosecu-
tus fuit, ex gra-
tia donavit be-
nesecit.

to Jesus Christ in the word of promise ; *Then he is gracious.*

The Originall word hath many comfortable significations in it, yet all resolvable into this one, *he is gracious.* It signifies to pity, to have compassion, tenderly to regard, to bestow grace, to doe good, there is enough in the bowells of this word to bear up the spirit of the sickest body, or of the most troubled soul. It is said (*Gen. 6. 8.*) *Noah found grace (or favour) in the eyes of the Lord.* *Noah* was the only man that held out the grace of God in that age, him only did God *find perfect or upright* in his Generation (*Gen. 6. 9.*) and *Noah* only was the man, that found grace or favour in the eyes of the Lord in that generation (*Gen. 6. 8.*) God was gracious to him and his, when the whole world perished by water. That proper name *John* is derived from this word ; when God gave *Zachary* and *Elizabeth* a Son in their old age, he also directed how he would have him called, *ye shall call his name John,* which name (as we may well conceive) was assigned him either because God did very graciously and favourably bestow that gift upon his Parents in their old age, and so shewed them much favour (*a child at any time is a great favour from God, especially in old age*) or, secondly, because *John* was to open the Kingdome of Grace, to preach the Gospel, and to prepare the way for Christ, by whom grace and truth came. The Baptist was as it were the *loop and button* between the legall and the Gospel dispensation ; therefore his name might well be called *John.* And there is frequent use in Scripture of the *Adverb* which comes from this *Verb*, to signifie injuries received without desert or undeservedly. (*Pf. 7. 4.*) *Yea, I have delivered him that without cause was mine enemy,* or that was mine enemy *gratis.* And again (*Psal. 35. 7.*) *For without cause have they hid for mee their net in a pit, which without cause have they digged for my soul.* Yet more, as the word signifies the doing of good (*gratis*) or when there is no desert ; so any injury done *gratis*, or when no provocation hath been given the party so to doe. Now, as all the mischief which the wicked plot against or doe to the people of God is undeserved, and floweth meerly from their malice, so all the good which God doth for his people is undeserved, and floweth purely from the fountaine of his free grace, or from his compassions, which faile not. And surely the Lord deserveth highest praises from man for any good he doth him, seeing what he doth is *gratis*, or undeserved.

Further,

goodneſſe and truth, keeping mercy for thouſands, forgiving iniquity. If we conſider God, firſt in doing us good ; Secondly, in forgiving us the evill which we doe ; Thirdly, in delivering us from the evils which we now ſuffer ; Fourthly, in delivering us from the feare of future ſufferings ; all is from grace and from free grace. He doth us good though we are undeſerving any good, that's grace, yea, he doth us good though we are ill deſerving, and that's more grace. He doth all for us through grace, Firſt, in ſpirituals, and Secondly, in temporalls ; not only doe the good things of eternall life, but the good things of this preſent life flow from grace unto his own people. Not only the health of their ſouls, but the health of their bodies, not only deliverance from hell, but deliverance from ſickneſſe alſo, flow from his free grace in Jeſus Chriſt. Therefore of all their mercies and ſalvations (both as to the foundation and top-ſtone of them) the people of God muſt cry (as the Prophet Zachery (Chap. 4. 7.) foretells the people of God ſhould ſay of that longed for deliverance, when *that great mountaine ſhould become a plain before Zerubbabell*) *grace, grace, unto them* : That is, grace hath begun them, and grace alone will maintaine, continue, and perfect what it hath begun. As there is nothing in us (except our miſery) which moves the Lord to begin, ſo there is nothing in us (but our inability) which moves the Lord to perfect what he hath begun. He ſeeth we cannot, and therefore he will perfect what he hath begun, and all this he doth that he may exalt his own name, and perfect the praife of his free grace towards us.

More diſtinctly, that all comes from grace, or from the graciousneſſe of God, may note theſe five things to us. Firſt, not only that God doth all for his people freely, or without deſert. But Secondly, that he doth all things willingly, or without constraint for his people. Thirdly, that he doth all things forwardly for his people. He doth very much unaskt and unſought, and he is not much askt or hardly drawne to doe any thing for his people. Though he hath ſaid of ſome things, *I will be ſought unto, or inquired after that I may doe them for you,* (Ezek. 36. 37.) yet his mercies are never forced nor wreſted from him by intreaties, but flow from a principle of love, naturally, as water out of a fountain. Fourthly, he doth all rejoycingly, *even with his whole heart, and with his whole ſoul.* Mercy pleaſeth him, and he is pleaſed with

occasions of shewing mercy, 'tis no burden to him to doe us good; mercy proceeds from his nature, and therefore he delighteth in mercy (*Mic. 7. 18.*) yea, to be mercifull is his nature, and therefore he cannot but delight in it. Fifthly, graciousness being the very nature of God, implyeth that he will do us good liberally, and constantly, or that (as the Apostle *James* speaks) he giveth liberally, and upbraideth not; he doth not upbraid us with our poverty, who receive, nor doth he upbraid us with the riches of the gifts which himself bestoweth; And because they flow from his nature, therefore he doth not in the least empty himself, how much soever he fills the creature with his gifts or goodness. Some men (upon the matter) even exhaust and undoe themselves by liberallity unto others; and they who give most, or have most to give, cannot alwayes give. It is said in this Book, (*Chap. 37. 11.*) *By watering, he wearyeth the thick cloud*; that is, God commandeth the cloud to give raine so long, that it hath not a drop more to give, but is quite spent. Springs or fountaines are never wearied or spent with watering, because their waters come as freely and as fast as they goe; God is an everlasting spring of grace and goodness; He is not wearied, nor emptied by what he giveth out to, or doth for the creature, because all floweth from his naturall graciousnesse as from a fountaine.

Then he is gracious. I would urge the second reference of that word (*then*) a little further; It was shewed before, that it might refer, First, to the extreamity of the sick man, Secondly, to the sick mans humiliation, or the right disposure of his spirit to receive renewed acts of grace, and favour from the Lord.

Hence observe, Secondly.

God usually dispenseth or giveth out acts of grace when we repent. Si agrotus ille and turne from sin, when we believe and lay hold upon the promise; Then he is gracious. monitis illum nunciij paruerit ac proinde refi-

It is said (*Isa. 30. 18.*): *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious.* The Lord hath alwayes a gracious disposition, a gracious nature; he alwayes hath a store, and a stocke, a rich stocke and store of mercy by him; but he doth not alwayes give it forth; no, *he waits to be gracious*, that is, he waits till we are in

a fit frame; till we are in a due temper to receive his grace. And because as to the dispensings of grace, God waits to be gracious; therefore many retard and hinder their owne good; they are not yet in a frame to receive; their vessell is not yet seasoned to hold mercy. The Lord waited to be gracious to *David* after his grievous fall, and therefore he did not give *Nathan* a Commission to say, *Thy sin is done away*, till *David's* heart was broken, and had said (*2 Sam: 12. 13.*) *I have sinned against the Lord*; But when once that word fell from him, then *Nathan* declared how gracious the Lord was to him. As soone as *David* said, *I have sinned* (that's an act of repentance) presently, *Nathan* said, *the Lord hath done away thy sin*, that's an act of grace. When did *Ephraim* heare a word of comfort from God? The Prophet tells us (*Jer: 31. 18, 19, 20.*) *I have heard Ephraim bemoaning himselfe*, (that is, mourning over and bewayling his sin) saying, *thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke*. We have him there also praying, *Turne me, O Lord, and I shall be turned*, &c. Upon this, how graciously, how meltingly did the Lord speak? *Is Ephraim my deare son? is he a pleasant child? since I spake against him, I doe earnestly remember him still*, (or, in remembring I remember him) *my bowells are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy on him*. Now I will manifest my grace, and acquaint him with my goodness. The Lord was very gracious to *Saul* afterwards *Paul*, he sent *Ananias* to him with a message of mercy, as to restore the sight of his bodily eyes, so to assure him that he should be an instrument in the hand of Christ to open the eyes of many, and a chosen vessel to beare his name before the Gentiles and Kings and the Children of Israel, (*Acts 9. 15.*) But when was this message delivered him? the text tells us (*v. 11.*) *For behold he prayeth*; the man is in the dust, he is brought upon his knees, his spirit is broken; that word *he prayeth*, comprehends the whole worke of a gracious soule, as to his humiliation and returning to the Lord. In the parable of the prodigall Son, his father is represented abundantly gracious to him; but he did not signifie it, he did not send the ring, nor the rich robe to him, when he was abroad in a strange Country among harlots, drinking and wasting his estate, time and strength vainely; we read of no acts of grace to him then, but when, being pinched with famine and hunger, he came

to himselfe, and began to bethinke himselfe of coming back to his fathers house, and that he had brought himselfe by his own folly to beggery, and want, and husks; when he was upon these termes, or resolves to goe home to his father, and cast himselfe at his feet as unworthy the name or priviledge of a Son, then his father ran to meete him, fell on his neck and kissed him, then he put on the ring, and cloathed him with the robe, then he killed the fatted calfe, and made a feast for him. All which sceane of mercy doth but hold out this one word in the text; *Then he is gracious.*

There are two sorts of gracious acts of God. First, some are acts of absolute grace, or of preventing grace; These are put forth upon and exercised towards the creature, before there is any the least preparation in the heart, to draw them out or invite the bestowing of them. Thus, the grace of God in election is absolutely free, there was no prevision of any qualification in man moving God to elect him. And so that wonderfull act of grace (in which election first descends and discovers it selfe) effectually vocation, is absolutely free. God calls a sinner when he is in the heat and hurry of his evill wayes, pursuing his lusts in the height of his pride, and in the hardness of his impenitent heart. Now, if when God first calleth a sinner there is nothing in him but sin; What can move God to call him but free grace? A third absolute act of grace is justification; God doth not justifie a sinner for any thing that he finds or sees in us; As to us 'tis altogether free. *He justifieth the ungodly* (Rom: 4. 5.) when that wretched infant was in its blood (which expresseth a miserable uncleane polluted condition) *then was a time of love* (Ezek: 16. 8.) then was God gracious. What loveliness was there in that infant (representing the best of men in that fallen naturall estate) to draw out the love of God? nothing at all, yea she was altogether unlovely, yet then (saith God) *thy time was the time of love*, or then was the time of putting forth love in her conversion and vocation; *Then, I sayd unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live.* And because the thing might seeme not only strange, but even impossible, that the heart of God should be towards such a wretched one for good, the word is doubled, *yea I sayd unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, live.* These acts of absolute free grace are the glory of the Covenant of grace; for if the Covenant should hold out acts of Grace only upon our pre-dispositions, when should we receive any act of grace?

The

The promise is not of this tenour, *I will pardon them when their hearts are soft and tender; but, I will take away the heart of stone, and give them a heart of flesh.*

Yet Secondly (as to the poynt in hand) there are conditionall acts of grace, I may call them second acts of grace, or renewed acts of grace. For when after conversion we fall into sin, and by that evill heart of unbelieve (remaining in a great measure unmortified) we depart from the living God (*Heb: 3. 12.*) God doth not give out fresh acts of grace, but upon repentance, and the renewings of our communion with him. Having once received grace, we being again helped and assisted by grace, act graciously, before God declares himselfe gracious to us. When a man is cast upon a sick bed for sin, (that's the case of many) the Lord will see repentance before he will raise him up againe. (*James 5. 15.*) *The prayer of faith shall save the sick, and if he hath committed sins, they shall be forgiven him;* that is, if he being cast upon a sick bed to correct or chasten him for the sin that he hath committed, shall humble himselfe, and seek the Lord by prayer, praying and calling for prayer; Then the sin committed shall be forgiven him, and the Lord will raise him up againe. 'Tis not the prayer of another that can obtaine deliverance for the sick, much lesse the forgiveness of his sins, if himselfe be prayer-lesse, and repentance-lesse. But while others pray for the sick mans bodyly health, they praying also for his soules health, the Lord gives him repentance for his sin, and then a comfortable sight of pardon. So then before the Lord puts out these second acts of grace, he looks for and finds something in the creature yet still, that also is an effect of his grace both to them and in them. They, who have already received grace, must stir up their grace, and renew acts of grace (thorough grace) towards him, before he dispenses acts of grace towards them. And as consolation in this life, so that highest and last act of grace, salvation, in the life to come, is not bestow'd upon any, till they are fitted. God calls and converts the worst of men, those that are in their filth, and mud, and mire, but he will not save a filthy person; he will have him first purged and prepared. *Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not enter into the kingdome of God* (*1 Cor: 6. 9.*) and that *without holiness no man shall see the Lord* (*Heb: 12. 14.*) There is no eternall salvation without preparation; nor is there any promise of tempo-
rall

rall salvation without it. When a man is sick to death (as in the text, salvation comes not, the Lord is not gracious till the sick mans spirit is humbled and set right; till the messenger hath shewed him, how he may stand upright before the Lord, and he hath embraced his message; then, and not till then *he is gracious*. And as in these words we have the occasion of this grace; so in the following words we have the publication of this grace; *Then he is gracious*.

And saith, Deliver him from going downe into the pit.

[*And saith*] that is, the Lord gives out an order presently, he gives out a warrant for the release of the sick man. When earthly Princes have once granted pardon to an offender, they say, *deliver him*; they signe a warrant for his deliverance out of prison, or they signe a pardon, and say, *deliver him from death*, when he is at the place of execution. Thus concerning this sick man, God saith, *deliver him from going downe to the pit*.

The word rendred *deliver*, signifies also to *redeem*, 'tis used in this forme no where else in all the Scripture. To free, deliver or redeeme a man, intimates his person in hold, *then will he say, deliver him*. From what? there are as many sorts of deliverances, as there are of troubles, each particular strait, and trouble, hath a proportionable deliverance: There is deliverance, First, from captivity or bondage. Secondly, from want or poverty. Thirdly, from imminent sudden danger or perill by land or Sea. Fourthly, from sicknesses and diseases. Fifthly, from death; and that twofold; First, from temporall; Secondly, from eternall death. Here when he saith, *deliver him*, we may determine this deliverance by the latter words of the text, to be a deliverance from deadly sickness; *deliver him from going downe to the pit*; that is, deliver him from death; To goe downe to the pit; is often in Scripture put to signifie dying.

Further, The pit implies *corruption*, because in the pit or grave, the body corrupts. It is sayd indeed (*Numb: 16. 30.*) of that rebellious triumvirate, *Corah, Dathan, and Abiram, they went downe alive into the pit*, but they went downe to death, and ordinarily the dead only goe downe to the pit. The same phrase is used (*Psal: 28. 1. Psal: 88. 4. Ezek: 31. 14. Ezek: 32. 18, 24, 29, 30.*) That text is very remarkeable (*Prov: 28. 17.*)

פרע idē quod
פרע redemit
liberavit ver-
bum פרע non
alias reperitur,
et pro ruione
loci intelligitur
et exponitur
pro ברה
Merc:

He that offereth violence to the blood of another, he shall flee to the pit, let no man stay him ; That is, The murderer, who in wrath and hatred, or upon private revenge destroyeth the life of any man, shall hasten to destruction, either as chased and hurried by his owne feares like *Cain* and *Judas*, or as prosecuted by the justice of the Magistrate. And as he thus hasteth to the pit, *so let no man stay him*, that is, First, let no man conceale him ; Secondly, let no man move for his impunity, or sollicite his pardon ; or if any doe, then Thirdly, let not the Magistrate grant his pardon ; For the old universall Law tells him his duty (*Gen: 9. 6.*) *He that sheddeth mans blood, by man* (that is, by the Magistrate commanding, and by his officers executing) *shall his blood be shed.* And as another Law hath it (*Deut: 19. 13.*) *Thine eye shall not spare him, &c.* The Magistrate who is in Gods stead, may not say of him, as here God doth of the sick man, *Deliver him from going downe to the pit. His blood is ill spared who would not spare the blood of another.*

But it may be questioned, for as much as the text saith only in general, *deliver him*, Into whose hands this warrant for his deliverance is delivered ? or who is directed to deliver him ? Master *Broughton* represents God speaking this to the sick mans disease, for thus he renders the text ; *Then he will have mercy upon him, and say, Spare him* (*O killing malady*) *from descending into the pit.* God will speak thus to the disease (and there is a great elegancy in it) *spare him O killing malady.* Diseases come and goe at Gods command ; they hurt and they spare at his direction ; As the Lords breath or word bloweth away the winds (*Math: 8. 27.*) *The men marvelled, saying, Who is this that even the winde and the seas obey him ?* So the Lords breath bloweth away sickness ; if he doe but speak to a disease, to a feaver, to an ague, to a dropisie, to a consumption, *O killing malady spare him*, thou hast done enough (any disease might prevaile to death, did not God say, *spare him*) hold thy hand, not a blow more, not a fit more *O killing malady.* Death it selfe, much more sickness, heareth the voyce of God. And it may be said to heare him, because it doth that, which they who have the power of hearing ought to doe ; that is, it obeyeth or yeildeth to the voyce and command of God, & will no longer afflict the sick man. Diseases may be said to deliver a man from death, & the pit, when they depart from him. Yet,

Secondly,

Secondly, I conceive this warrant for the deliverance of the sick man, is given out to the *messenger or interpreter, to the one among a thousand*, that visiteth him in his sickness. He having been with him, and dealt with his conscience, he having brought him into a good frame, the Lord is gracious, and in answer to his prayer, sets it upon his heart that he shall recover, and warrants him to tell him so, which is, declaratively, *to deliver him from going downe to the pit*. This act of mans delivering the sicke, is like that act of man pardoning the sinner (*John 20. 23.*) that is, 'tis ministeriall or declarative, not originall nor Authoritative. The interpreter doth not deliver him, but tells him God will. We have the Psalmist speaking thus after his supplication and prayer made to the Lord for a sick State or Nation or for a sick Church (that's his scope, *Psal: 85.*) *Wilt thou not revive us againe, that thy people may rejoyce in thee* (v. 6.) Surely thou wilt, and he expresseth his confidence, that God would (v. 8.) *I will heare what God the Lord will speake, for he will speake peace unto his people, and to his Saints*. When he had prayed he would harken for news, or for a message from heaven, whether or no, the Lord would order him to speak peace to those for whom he had been praying, and say, *deliver them from going downe to the pit*. Thus did the Prophet *Habakkuk*, *I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon my tower, and see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved* (Chap: 2. 1.) In the next verse, *The Lord answered and sayd, write the vision and make it plaine upon tables, that he may run that readeth it*. And what was the answer? surely deliverance; for having sayd, *in the end it shall speake and not lye* (v. 3.) he concludes (v. 4.) *The just shall live by his faith*. Believing deliverance, he shall at last be delivered from the pit of captivity and live.

Here in the text we must suppose this messenger had prayed, and having prayed, he did not neglect his prayer, but was hearkning what the Lord would say. *Elihu* was confident the Lord would give a gracious answer, though not by an immediate voyce or revelation to his eare, yet by an assurance of the mercy given into his spirit. When that good king *Hezekiah*, was not only sick unto death, but had received an expresse message from the Lord, *Set thy house in order, for thou shalt dye and not live* (2 Kings 20. 1.) 'Tis sayd at the 2d verse, *He turned his face to the wall, and*

F f f

prayed

Sequestrem illum subebit et renunciare im-petratum offe-sibi liberatio-nem. Bez:

prayed unto the Lord, saying, &c. And at the 4th verse, *The word of the Lord came to Isaiah the Prophet, saying, turne againe, and tell Hezekiah the Captain of my people; Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seene thy teares, behold, I will heale thee, &c.* Here God gave a word formally, and put it into the Prophets mouth, *Goe deliver him from going downe to the pit.* And though the Lord doth not thus now in such an explicite and open way, nor may we expect it, yet there is a virtuall saying of this word from the Lord, and that sometimes mightily imprest upon the hearts of those who have prayed and sought unto him, for the sick man, whereby (not by an ungrounded vaine confidence, but by a scripturall holy confidence, comparing the promise with the mans condition) they are enabled to tell him, *The Lord hath delivered thee from going downe to the pit.* And he shall as certainly be delivered, as if the Lord had sent an expresse from heaven to tell him so. *Then he is gracious to him, and saith, deliver him from going downe to the pit.*

Hence observe.

First, *Death is a going to the pit, a going to destruction.*

Thus it is ordinarily with all who dye, to the pit they goe. Many dye and goe downe to the bottomles pit; all who dye may be sayd to goe to the pit. To goe to the bottomles pit, is the circumlocution of eternall death, as to goe to the pit is the circumlocution of temporall death.

Secondly, Forasmuch as the man being sick the Lord gives out this word, *deliver him from going downe to the pit.*

Note.

Sickness hath in it a tendency unto death.

The sick stand as it were upon the borders of the grave. Some not only put death far from them in health, but in their sickness; untill they are even dead, they scarce thinke themselves dying. It is good for us in our health and best strength to be looking into the pit; and considering upon what grounds of comfort we can descend into the grave. How much more should we be thinking of and looking into the pit, when we are in a languishing and dying condition?

Thirdly, Observe.

The

The word and work of deliverance is from God alone ; Then he will be gracious and say, deliver him from going downe to the pit.

God can, and God only can deliver from death ; no creature in heaven or earth can speak this but by commission from God ; none can open this secret till God interpret it. Deliverance is the Lords salvation ; and the word of salvation from sickness, as well as of salvation from hell, comes out from the Lord.

But is it not sayd (*Pro: 11. 4.*) *Righteousness delivereth from death.*

I answer ; when it is sayd, *Righteousness delivereth from death,* The meaning is, God delivereth the righteous from death. He delivereth them from the sting and terror, from all that which is properly called the evill of corporall death ; and he delivereth them wholly from the least touch or shadow of eternall death. And this righteousness which delivers from death is not our own, but the righteousness of Christ made ours by the appoyntment of God, and received as ours by faith. 'Tis neither any righteousness wrought in us, nor any righteousness wrought by us, but that righteousness which is wrought for us, which delivereth from death : and that delivereth us from death, because God saith of such a righteous person, deliver him, as often from temporall death, or going downe to the pit of the grave, so alwayes from eternall death, or going downe to the pit of hell.

Fourthly, In that this word *deliver him*, is given to the messenger.

Observe.

God conveighs deliverance and mercy to us by men like ourselves.

He will have the creature beholding to the creature for his mercy, though mercy come freely and only from himselfe. God delivereth the sick and the sinner in such a method that we may owne, though not stay in his messengers, as the instruments of his favour. God who can doe all things by himselfe, will not doe many things but by meanes. He saith to the messenger, *Deliver him from going downe to the pit.*

You will say, How can a Minister or a Messenger deliver the sick from going downe to the pit ?

I answer, (as was touched before) he delivers him by declaring to him the minde of God, by acquainting the sick with the promises of deliverance, and by pressing him to believe and rest upon them; by assuring him that as God is able to performe the promise, so he is faithfull and willing to performe it; yea that he hath given some tokens for good that he will deliver him from going downe to the pit. Thus the worke of Gods free grace, mercy, and power, is oftentimes attributed to instruments and second causes, because they have their place and use in the bringing about the purposes of God for the good of his people. Hence some men are called *Saviours*; *And Saviours shall come up on mount Zion* (Obad: v. 21.) No man can save either from temporall or eternall destruction; *He that is our God is the God of salvation, and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death* (Pl: 68. 20.) yet saith the Prophet, *there shall come Saviours*; that is, God will raise up worthy men; *principall men* (as another Prophet calls them, *Mic: 5. 5.*) who shall destroy Zions enemies. Thus Paul admonisheth Timothy, *Take heed to thy selfe, and to thy doctrine, continue in them, for in so doing thou shalt save thy selfe and them that heare thee* (1 Tim: 4. 16.) The Apostle James (Chap: 5. 20.) speakes the same thing; *He which converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soule from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins.* And the same Apostle saith (as to the case in the text) at the 15th verse of the same Chapter; *The prayer of faith shall save the sicke.* Though none can save, yet many are means of our salvation. And the Lord is pleased to honour those who are the meanes of any salvation, so farre, as to say, *They save.* It is indeed the duty of all to ascribe the all of every worke and piece of salvation and deliverance to God only. When the people stood wondering at Peter and John after they had healed the lame man, Peter answered (Acts 3. 12.) *Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why looke ye so earnestly on us, as if we by our own power or holiness had made this man to walke. The God of Abraham, &c. hath glorified his Son Jesus;* As if they had said, Therefore doe ye also glorifie him, not us for delivering this lame man. Though God is pleased to put much honour upon man, by speaking of what himselfe doth; as if man had done it; yet he will not give the glory of what he doth to any man, nor may any take it. God saith to the messenger, *deliver him from going downe to the*

pit; but woe to that messenger who saith (when he is delivered) I have delivered him from going downe to the pit.

Thus we see the spring of the sick mans recovery, it is from the graciousness of God, and we see the meanes of it, God gives a warrant to his messenger, saying, *Deliver him from going down to the pit*; But what is the procuring or meritorious cause of this deliverance? As the Text hath shewed us the first moving cause, *The grace of God*, so it shewes us the meritorious cause, by which his deliverance is procured; Things are so ordered in the Covenant of grace, that though the Lord acts with infinite freeness, yet he hath appointed and ordered a way in which alone he will doe, what he freely doth. This is expressed in the last clause of the verse,

For I have found a ransome.

But where did God find it? certainly in his own bosome, in his own heart; Jesus Christ came out of the bosome of the Father, there he was, God found him in and with himself; God did not find the ransome by chance, nor did he find it by advice and consultation with others, but he found it in himself, in his own infinite wisdom and goodness; that is, he contrived it, he invented it there. This rare, this most excellent thing, *a ransome*, is the *Lords own invention*. *I have found it*, I know how to doe this man good, I know how to save him, and doe my own honour and Justice no hurt, no wrong: my honour is saved, my Justice is satisfied in doing it. *I have found a ransome.*

The word here rendred *a ransome* signifies in the Verb, *to cover* or *to hide* that which before lay open, that it appeare no more. Grace brings another face upon things, a new face, I may say, upon our souls. The covering of sin elegantly denotes the pardon of sin. And what reason have we to be thankfull and rejoyce, when sin (our soul durt and deformity) is covered? We have very foul faces (I meane outward conversations) and more foul souls, or inward inclinations, till the Lord is graciously pleased to put a covering upon them. If we cover our own sins we shall have no mercy, but if the Lord once cover our sins, he cannot deny us mercy, that being it self our greatest mercy, and the fruit of his great mercy. *The Mercy-seat*, so famous in the Mosaicall Pædogogy, is exprest by this word, which properly signifieth a *Covering*.

Verbum כפר denotet expiationem, aut redemptionem, tum, etiam pretium quod pro redemptione offertur. Significat etiam cooperare linire, aut cooperare bitumine, quasi pristinam faciem vel alicuius immunditiam abscondere; quod eleganter refertur ad absterionem peccati. Pined.

The *Mercy-seat* was it self a *Covering* of pure gold, laid over the *Arke*, in which *Arke* the Law was put (*Exod. 25. 17. 21.*) Thou shalt put the *Mercy-seat* above upon the *Arke*, and in the *Ark* thou shalt put the testimony that I shall give thee. And as the dimensions of the *Arke* were two Cubits and a halfe in length, and a Cubit and a half in breadth, so the same were the dimensions of the *Mercy-seat*; (*Vers. 10. 17.*) which figured that as the *Mercy-seat* fully covered the *Arke* wherein the Law was, so *Christ* should fully cover all our sins, which are transgressions of the Law. The righteousness of *Christ* is as long and as broad as the Law, and so, our sins being covered with that shall never appeare against us. Therefore also from above this *Mercy-seat* between the two *Cherubims* (the Lord said (*vers. 22.*) I will meete thee, and I will commune with thee. There was a gracious manifestation of the presence of God above the *Mercy-seat*, because that typified *Jesus Christ* the true *Propitiatory* or *ransome*, covering and hiding out of the sight of God for ever all our deflections iniquities and transgressions. And hence the same word which signifies expiation or redemption, signifieth also the procuring cause of our Redemption, here called (as also in the New Testament) *A Ransome*.

I have found a *Ransome*. A *ransome* is properly a price demanded for release out of bondage. And when the *Captive* is released, the price is paid. To be redeemed and to be ransomed is the same thing. (*Isa. 35. 9, 10.*) The redeemed shall passe there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall returne and come to *Sion*, and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtaine joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Thus here, Deliver him (saith the Lord) from going downe to the pit; I am satisfied, I have found a price, a *ransome*. Both Law and Gospel meet in this; here is the Law, by which the man being humbled confesseth his own sin, and the wrath of God, due to it. Here is also the Gospel, by which he hath been taught to beleieve, that his sins are pardoned, and the wrath of God turned away from him for the *ransome* which *Christ* hath paid.

So then, 'tis not as popish Expositors tell us, I have found a *ransome*, that is, I have found the mans good workes, I have found his repentance, I have found his tears, his prayers, his almes. I now see that in him for which I may be propitious to him, and deliver

Græci dicunt
ἀντίστον quod
non est aliud
quam sanguis
Christi, in quem
et veteres crediderunt.
Merc:

deliver him from the sickness under which he is detained ; thus they generally make somewhat in man or done by man, his *ransome*, at least to have a share in it. The heart (as was shewed before) is prepared for deliverance, by the workings of faith and repentance. But the *ransome* upon which deliverance is given, is nothing at all wrought in us or by us. Woe to us notwithstanding our prayers and repentance, our reformations and humiliations. To put these in place of a *ransome*, or to hope for deliverance from the pit upon their account is to pervert the whole Gospel.

Apparet in homine aliquid equitatis, ex quo ei miserere possum, quoniam querebam.
Aquinas

Others give a better sence, yet not clear enough, thus, *He hath humbled himself, and I am as well satisfied as if I had received a ransome*, but I lay that by also. For when God saith *I have found a ransome*, we are to understand it of a reall *ransome*, of full pay or satisfaction, not of a *ransome* by favour and acceptation. This satisfaction to the justice of God is only and wholly made by *Jesus Christ*, without any the least contribution from man. The perfect *ransome* which the Lord finds is the blood of his own Son, which is called the blood of the Covenant, because thereby the Covenant is confirmed, and all Covenant mercies assured to us. Upon this price or *ransome* God restores the sick sinner and pardons him, he heals both his body and his soul. And that *Job* had knowledge of this *ransome* as the only meanes of deliverance, appears (Chap. 17. 3. 19. 25.) *Deliver him, for I have found a ransome.*

Hence Observe, First.

The redemption or deliverance of man by a ransome is the invention of God, and the invention of God only.

If all men on-earth, yea if all the Angells in Heaven had sat from the foundation of the world to this day, in counsell bearing their braines, and debating this question, *How man, sinfull man might be delivered out of the hand of the Law, or from that condemnatory sentence under which the Law had cast and detained him, with satisfaction, or without damage to the Justice and righteousness of God, they could never have found it out, nor any thing like it.* This is Gods own invention ; or, if God had said to fallen man, *I see thou art in a lost pitifull condition, but sit down and consider how I may doe thee good, and not wrong my selfe, how I may relieve thee, and not dishonour my selfe, I will freely doe it.* If God (I say) had given :

angelus dei.

given man a blank to write downe what he would have done to bring this about, he could never have found it out ; but muſt have periſhed for ever in his ſin. The thought of a ranſome in this way had never entred into the heart either of men or Angells, if God himſelf had not revealed it. Therefore the Apoſtle *Peter* having ſpoken of the great diligence of the old Prophets ſearching into and inquiring about that great myſtery, the way and means of mans ſalvation, concludes (*1 Epist: 1. 12.*) *Which things the Angells deſire to look into.* The word there uſed notes a curious prying into that which hath ſome veyled or ſecret rarity in it. We may conceive the Apoſtle in that word alluding to the Cherubims, which by Gods command, to *Moses*, were made with their eyes looking downe to the Mercy-ſeat or propitiatory in the *Holy of holies* (*Exod. 25. 20.*) figuring the ranſome in the Text, yea and expreſſed by the ſame Hebrew word. The living Angells doe that which thoſe representative Angells ſeemed to doe, they look earneſtly at the myſtery of our redemption made, or ranſome given by Jeſus Chriſt. There is ſuch an exquisite neſſe in this invention, the deliverance of man by Chriſt, that the Angells deſire to look into it, even as men deſire to ſee rare inventions. And this exceedingly commends the wiſdome of God in our redemption, that it was a ſecret to the very glorious Angells. They did not know it, but as it was made knowne to them ; nor did God (as it ſeemes) make it knowne to them firſtly or immediately, but it was revealed to them, occaſionally by the revelation of it firſt to the Church ; as the Apoſtle doth more then intimate, (*Eph. 3. 10.*) *To the intent, that now unto principalities and powers in heavenly places, (that is the holy Angells) might be known by the Church the manifold wiſdome of God.* As if, had it not been for the light given to and ſpread abroad in the Church, the Angells had been in the dark to this day about that matter. And doubtleſſe if the Angells did not gather up their knowledge of that myſtery by the miniſtery of the Apoſtles preaching it to the world, in a way of information, yet by their contemplation of what was done in the Church, & of the goodneſſe of God to the Church, they ſaw as in a glaſſe that manifold wiſdome of God which before they ſaw not, or were ignorant of. Now if the holy Angells knew not this myſtery, but as it was revealed, much leſſe could man. *We* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *1 Cor. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9.*) *ſpeake wiſdome among*

among them that are perfect : yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the Princes of this world, that come to naught. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, &c. which none of the Princes of this World know, (who use to be the most knowing men in the World) *Ecclēsia est iudicis pariter ac gentibus eol-* for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord *la, quasi speculum est in quo* of glory. As if he had said, surely the Princes of the world would *contemplantur Angeli mirificam dei sapientiam, quam antea nesciebant.* have adored, not reproached and crucified Christ, had they understood who he was, or the worke which he came about. And therefore the Apostle calls it not only a mystery, but a great mystery, *Cato.* and that there is not the least question, but 'tis a great mystery.. (1 Tim. 3. 16.) Without controversie great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh ; this great mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God (Eph. 3. 9.) that is in the counsell and decree of God, hath been also some way or other revealed by God almost as soon as the world began ; It was revealed to *Adam* by the promise of the womans seed ; and to *Abraham* by promise, that in his Seed all the Nations of the earth should be blessed ; It was revealed to the Church of the Jewes in Ceremonies and Prophecies, and it hath been revealed to the Church both of Jewes and Gentiles by the Spirit in the preaching of the word, ever since Christ paid this ransome to this day ; and it had been hidden to this day, if the Lord had not revealed it ; 'tis therefore the *Lords invention.*

Let me add this by way of inference. We honour men that bring forth any rare invention. And if it be an invention which also produceth profit and advantage to mankind, how are the Authors of it admired, and their names recorded ? All the inventions of the most refined wits in the world, are dull pieces to *this invention* ; the redemption of man by Christ. And as there is the stamp of an infinite unchangeable wisdom upon it ; so the profit which comes in by it to mankind is infinite and inestimable. How then should we honour God, both for bringing this wonderfull invention to light, and giving us the benefit of it freely ! It had been great mercy if God had delivered us upon our finding out and proposall of a way to him ; but he hath not only delivered us, but found out a way himself, and plotted how we might be delivered. What a glorious mercy is this ! When *Darius* saw how *Daniel* was insnared by his act or decree, he was extremely troubled, and (saith the Text, *Dan. 6. 14.*) he was sore displeased with

with himselfe, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him, and he laboured (beating his braines and studying) till the going down of the Sun to deliver him, yet could not, but cast he was to the hungry Lions, only he told him, (*vers. 16.*) *Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee.* Darius could not find a ransome, any meanes of deliverance for his servant and great Favourite Daniel. But when we had brought ourselves into a snare, and must have been cast to the Lions for ever, to be torne by them, the Lord brought forth this rare invention, a ransome, whereby we poor sinners are delivered out of the mouth of the roaring Lion, who goeth about continually to devour us.

Secondly, Inasmuch as deliverance is got by ransome.

Observe.

Our deliverance is costly.

Soules are precious, they are dear ware; Blood, and that the blood of Christ is their ransome; (*Math. 20. 28. Rom. 3. 2. 5. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Heb. 9. 12. Rev. 5. 9.*) in comparison of which all the treasures of this world are trash, our Gold and Silver corruptible, and our very righteousness a corrupt thing. Deliverances are obtained three wayes.

First, By power or plaine force; thus Abraham delivered his Nephew Lot when he was carryed captive (*Gen. 14. 14.*) He armed his trained servants, born in his house three hundred and eighteen, and rescued him. I may say, the Lord Jesus hath delivered us thus, even by force and power, he hath beaten all our enemies, and having broken and spoyled principallities and powers, he made a skew of them openly, triumphing over them in it (his Crosse spoken of in the former verse) or in himselfe; that is, in his own personall power, not by any aide or forreigne assistance received from men or Angells.

Secondly, Deliverance is obtained by price or payment. When our friends or country-men are taken Captives by *Turkes* or others, we cannot send an Army to rescue them, but usually we doe it by ransome; we buy them againe out of the enemies hand, or out of bondage. Jesus Christ hath delivered us, not only by power, but by price, it was not (as hath been already shewed) by gold or silver, but by his own most precious blood, (*1 Pet. 1. 18.*) Jesus Christ hath delivered us out of the soul destroying hand of

Satan

Satan by force, but he delivers us out of the ſin-revenging hand of his Father by price. Chriſt owed the Devill nothing (nor doe we) but blowes, but having undertaken our cauſe, he owed his Father as much as our debt and deliverance from it amounted to, a vaſt ſumme, yet he had enough to answer it to the utmoſt farthing, and did, and ſo delivered us.

There is a third way of deliverance, and that is by ſupplication and interceſſion, which may be conſidered two wayes, Firſt, by our own prayers and ſupplications; Secondly, by the prayers and ſupplications of others; which prayers of others are properly called interceſſions. The interceſſion of a man with man may deliver him from the wrath of a man. And the interceſſion of a man with God, hath wrought the temporall deliverance of ſome both perſons, and Nations; and therefore when the Lord was reſolved not to ſpare his people, he forbade the interceſſion of the Prophet (*Jer. 14. 11.*) *Pray not for this people for their good*: And he profeſſed (*Jer. 15. 1.*) *Though Moſes and Samuel* (thoſe two mighty Advocates) *ſtood before me* (praying he meanes for them) *yet my mind could not be towards this people, caſt them out of my ſight*; In that God would not deliver his people upon their interceſſion, is an argument that he often doth. But 'tis the interceſſion of Chriſt alone which carryeth it with God (and that alwayes carryeth it, for the Father alwayes heareth him, that is, granteth his requests) for the deliverance of his people both from temporall ſpirituell and eternall evils. This interceſſion of Chriſt is the fruit of his blood ſhed, or of the ranſome paid down for us. For as his blood purchaſeth our deliverance, ſo by his interceſſion it is given in or applied to us. We have the impetration of our pardon by Chriſts ſufferings, and the application of it, by Chriſt interceding for us. So then, we are delivered both by power, and price, and prayer, in ſeverall and diſtinct reſpects; But the preſent text ſpeaks of deliverance only by a price, *I have found a ranſome*, I am well paid, ſaith God, for mans deliverance. This ranſome every poor ſoul may plead before the Lord, for his deliverance both from ſickneſſe death and hell. He that hath nothing to offer to the Lord (as indeed the beaſt have nothing of their own worth the offering, and if they offer any thing of their own, of how much worth ſoever it may ſeem to be, it will not paſſe nor be accepted, he (I ſay) that hath nothing of his own to offer) yet may tell him

him he shall be well paid; he may tell God, he shall have more by saving him, then by damning him. If he damne him he shall have but his own blood (the blood of a creature): for satisfaction; but if he save him, he shall have the blood of his Son, the blood of God, as a rancome for his salvation.

Thirdly, Observe.

Though the Gospel was not clearly and fully revealed in those elder times, yet it was then savingly revealed.

How doth the grace of God shine forth in mans deliverance by a rancome, in this Scripture; Here is nothing said of deliverance from sickness by medicines, but by a rancome; and if they knew that deliverance from a disease must come in by a rancome, how much more, that deliverance from damnation must come in that way? The old Patriarkes had the knowledge of Christ to come, and not only was there a knowledge of him to come in that nation and Church of the Jewes, but the light scattered abroad, the Land of Uz had it, Job had it, as hath appeared from severall passages of this Booke, Elihu had it as appeareth by this.

Fourthly, Observe.

Not only our eternall deliverances, but even our temporall deliverances and mercies, are purchased by the blood of Christ.

A beleever doth not eate a bit of bread, but he hath it by vertue of the purchase of Christ; Christ hath bought all good for us, and Christ hath bought us out of all evill. Christ hath not only purchast deliverance from hell, and salvation in heaven for us, but he hath purchast deliverance from a sick bed, and freedome from bondage to men for us. (*Zech. 9. 11.*) *As for thee also* (saith the Lord) *by the blood of thy Covenant* (that is, the Covenant which I have made with thee) *I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein was no water*; that is, from the Babylonish captivity. The Jewes were delivered from corporall slavery, as well as spirituall, by the blood of Jesus Christ, and so are the Covenant people of God to this day. The blood of the Covenant serves to all purposes, for the good things of this life, as well as of that which is to come. Nothing else can do us good to purpose, or deliver us from evill but the blood of Christ. (*Pf. 49. 7, 8.*) *They that trust in their wealth, & boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none*

of them can by any meanes redeeme his brother, nor give to God a ranfome for him. In some cafes, as Solomon faith, (*Prov. 13. 8.*) *The ranfome of a mans life are his riches.* As a mans riches doe often endanger his life (all the fault of some men for which they have suffered as deep as death, hath been only this, they were rich) so a man by his riches may redeeme his forfeited or endangered life, he may buy off the wrath of man, and so ranfome his life by his riches. But all the riches in the world cannot buy his life out of the hand of sickness; though a man would lay out all his substance, and spend all that he hath upon Physitians (as the poor woman in the Gospel did) yet that could not doe it. We need the blood of Jesus Christ to help us out of a sick bed, and from temporall sufferings as well as from hell and everlasting sufferings. And the more spirituall any are, the more they have recourse to the blood of Christ for all they would have, whether it be freedome from this or that evill, or enjoyment of this or that good.

Therefore, First, When we hear of a ranfome let us remembre that we are all naturally captives. Here is a ranfome for our souls and a ranfome for our bodies, we are ransomed from hell, and ransomed from death, surely then, we are (through sin) made captives to all these.

Secondly, In that the ranfome is exprest by a word, that notes hiding or covering, it should mind us, that, *Jesus Christ by his blood* (which is our ranfome) *hath covered all our bloody sins*; and surely the blood of our sins will appeare not only to our shame, but to our confusion, unless the blood of Christ cover them.

Thirdly, We may hence infer, *The Lord shall be no loser by saving the worst of sinners.* His Son hath taken care for that, he hath undertaken to see his Honour saved, and his Justice satisfied.

Fourthly, In all your outward afflictions and sicknesses; apply to the blood of Christ for healing, for helpe and deliverance.

Fifthly, Being delivered from going down to the pit, from death by sickness, *blesse Christ for his blood.* We are rescued from the arrest of death, from *Deaths Sergeant*, sickness, by the blood of Christ. And remember that as Christ ransomes us from going down:

downe to the grave when we are sick, so Christ will ransom us from the power of the grave when we are dead. (*Hosea* 13. 14.) *I will ransom them from the power of the grave.* Which though it were primarily meant of the deliverance of the Jewes out of *Babylon*, where they seemed to be not only dead but buried; yet the Apostle applyeth it clearly to the ransoming of the body dead indeed and laid in the grave, by the power of Christ at the generall resurrection (*1 Cor.* 15. 54.) *For then shall be brought to passe that saying that is written, Death is swallowed up of victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy Victory.* Yea Christ hath ransomed all those from going down to the pit of hell, who take hold of his ransom by believing. See that you have an interest in this ransom, else you will never have deliverance from going downe to that pit. We read not all the Scripture over of any ransom to deliver those, who are once gone downe to that bottomlesse pit. They that are in the grave shall be ransomed and recovered by the power of Christ; but they that goe into hell shall never be ransomed from thence. Take hold of this ransom that ye may have full deliverance, both from sickness leading to death here, and from hell which is the second death hereafter.

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 25, 26.

His flesh shall be fresher then a childes ; he shall returne to the dayes of his youth.

He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy ; for he will render unto man his righteousness.

IN these two verses *Elihu* proceeds, to shew the perfecting of the sick mans recovery, the foundation of which was layd in the Lords graciousness to him, spoken of in the former verse ; and the declaration of it in that word or warrant, which went out from God to the messenger about his deliverance *from going downe to the pit.*

This mercy or recovery in the full extent of it, hath a two-fold respect ; First, to his body ; Secondly, to his soule.

The mercy as it respects his body, is layd downe in the 25th verse ; *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes ; he shall returne as in the dayes of his youth.*

The mercy which respects his soule, or the state of his inward man, is layd downe in the 26th verse ; *He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him, and he shall see his face with joy ; for he will render unto him his righteousness.*

In this recovery of his soule-state, we may further consider, First, the causes of it.

First, The Instrumentall cause, *prayer ; He shall pray unto God.*

Secondly, The principall or efficient cause of it, together with the first moving cause, The kindness of God ; *He will be favourable unto him.*

Secondly, The consequence of this his renewed soule-state ; *He shall see his face with joy.*

Thirdly, The matter wherein this joyfull state doth consist, in the close of the 26th verse ; *For he will render to man his righteousness.*

So much for the scope and parts of these two verses ; which shew the blessed issue, which God gives this distressed and sick man from his afflictions and sorrowes.

Vers. 25.

Vers. 25. *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes.*

By *flesh* he meanes the naturall flesh of the body; this flesh shall be fresh, yea *fresher*, and not only fresher then it was before he fell sick in his man-hood, but then it was in his child-hood, *fresher then a childes*. The word which we render comparatively, *fresher*, signifies to wax soft or tender. 'Tis nowhere read in the whole Bible but here. Grammarians say, it is compounded of an Hebrew word, which signifies to be Greene or flourishing (*Chap. 8. 16.*) and of a Syriack word which signifies to increase and grow as a plant; we render it as noting the man mending apace (as some (ut cap: 8. 16.) sick men upon recovery doe) in his strength and health. He shall be fresh-coloured, who before was pale and wan, he shall be full-fleshed, who before was fallen and leane; so that, when he saith, *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes*, 'Tis an Elegant hyperbolical expression, to shew his perfect recovery from that mortal sickness to health. As if he had sayd; *God will restore him so, that there shall be no scarr, nor print, no dregs, nor appearance of his former disease scene upon him.* We know how tender and soft, how delicate and faire, the flesh of a little child is, how sweete his countenance is, how full of good blood his veines are, how healthy and strong. (as to his time) his whole body is. Thus it shall be with this sick man; *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes*; he shall be as if he were new-borne, or entred a second time upon the stage of this world. Our spirituall estate of renovation by Christ is set forth as a youthfull, or child-like state, as to the purity and perfection of it (*Eph: 5. 27.*) *Christ shall present us to himsele a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing.* The Church hath her sin-spots and wrinkles now in her militancy; but when Christ shall present the Church at last triumphantly to himsele, then as himsele was ever without spot or wrinkle, so shall the Church be. Her flesh shall indeed be fresher then a childes, being perfectly recovered out of her spirituall sickness. And thus, in proportion, *Elihu* assures the penitent sick man, that, when his peace is renewed with God, and his spirit set right for God, his very flesh shall be without spot or wrinkle, *fresher then a childes*. The latter part of the verse beares the same sence.

שׁוּבָה molli-
tur, recreatus
fuit, alibi quan-
hic non legitur.
Ex חַיִּים quod
viventem signi-
ficat ac vegetū
ut cap: 8. 16.)
et וְדָ quod sy-
riacè significat
crescere, q. d.
revirescet plan-
tarum more et
germinum.
Merc:

Notat perfectis-
simum sanitatis
modum, qui nul-
lum transiti
morbi vestigi-
um relinquit.
Mert:

He

He shall returne as in the dayes of his youth.

That is, he shall not barely recover his health, and get upon his leggs againe (as we say) he shall not meereley escape death and the grave, but he shall have an addition of bodily ability, he shall, as it were, be young againe. As sickness makes a young man look old, so recovery from sickness makes the old man look young. That's to returne to the dayes of his youth.

Hence Note; First.

Bodily beauty, health and strength are the Gift of God.

He gives them, and takes them away at pleasure, or having taken them away, he can give them backe when he pleaseth. *He kills and he makes alive, he bringeth downe to the Grave, and bringeth up,* as *Hannah* sayd in her Song (*1 Sam: 2. 6.*) How low soever a man is brought by sickness, either proper or metaphorically, the Lord is able to raise him up againe. We read (*v. 21.*) in how pitifull a plight, the sick man was, how rather like a carcasle then a living man he lookt, *His flesh was consumed, that it could not be seene, and his bones which were not seene, stood out;* as much as to say, *He was nothing but skin and bones;* yet, when in that case all hopes were gone, and all natural helps fayled, it was no hard matter with God to cure him. When the skill of the Physician, and the vertue of medicines fayle, the power of God sayleth not. As it is in reference to those outward dangers and desperate exigents, which we meete with in this world by enemies and persecutors, when we look upon our selves as dead men, when all hope of deliverance seems past & gone, then the Lord alwayes can and often doth deliver. The Apostle gives us his experience of it (*2 Cor: 1. 9, 10.*) *We had the sentence of death in our selves;* he spake not thus in regard of sickness, but of trouble and persecution; As if he had sayd, The malice and wrath of our enemies was such, that we thought we should never escape, *we had the sentence of death in our selves,* but providence suffered it to be so, that *we should not trust in our selves, but in God who raiseth the dead.* As it is (I say) in such dangers, so in dangerous deadly sicknesses; when a poore creature hath the sentence of death in himselfe, when he makes no other reckoning but to dye, as good King *Hezekiah* sayd of himselfe in his sickness (*Isa: 38. 13.*)

reckoned till morning, that, as a Lyon, so will he breake all my bones, from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me; yet then as in his case, so in many cases the Lord stretcheth forth a healing hand and takes the sick man up againe, to continue in the land of the living.

Secondly, From the way of expressing this, in allusion to a childe or a youth.

Note.

God he can quickly make the greatest changes in nature, either for the better or for the worse, He can turne youth into old age, and old age into youth.

That is, he can make a young or a healthy man weake as an old man, and an old or sickly man strong as a young man; and as it is with naturall, so with politicall bodies, as with persons, so with nations. A nation that is flourishing in its youth, heate, strength and glory, rich and full of peace and plenty, God can bring an oldness upon it, and cause it to decline every day. The Prophet spake of the state of *Israel* in this notion (*Hos. 7. 9.*) *Gray haire are here and there upon them, and they perceive it not;* they thought themselves to be in a very youthfull flourishing condition (as a state) but the Lord brought gray haire, that is, they were decaying, withering, weakning, and became a decrepid nation; And when a nation is gray-hayred, old and withered, he can make it youthfull, he can recover the honour and power of it, and cause the dread of it to fall upon the neighbouring nations round about. He turnes a land into a wilderness, which before was as the Garden of God; And he can change that land into a Garden of God which now is a desolate wildernes. The unchangeable Lord is visible and glorious in all these changes. The health and strength both of the body politick and naturall are at his dispose. He can bring a decay upon what is built, and repaire what is decayed, whether in nations or persons. When the earthly house of this Tabernacle is ready to drop downe into the grave, and crumble into dust, God by a word speaking, repayreth it to as much beauty and strength, as when, the first stone being layd, the top-stone was set up. When *Naaman* had once submitted to and obeyed the Prophets counsell, which at first he despised, & washed in *Jorden*, *His flesh* (saith the text, *2 Kings 5. 14.*) *came againe.*

gaine like unto the flesh of a little childe. The holy Psalmist charged his owne soule to praise the Lord, and all that was within him to blesse his holy name (Psal: 103. 1, 5.) Who had satisfied his mouth with good things, so that his youth was renewed as the Eagle. This renovation of his youth may be understood three wayes; First, as to his naturall state, or bodyly strength. Secondly, as to his civill state or worldly successes, as to his honour and kingly renowne. Thirdly, as to his spirituall state, or the hightning of his gifts, graces, and comforts. 'Tis probable, David had found a declension in all these, and at last through the goodness of God and his blessing upon him, the renewing of them all from that oldness to a youthfullness againe, like that of Eagles. We find the same allusion in the Prophet (*Isa: 40. 31.*) *They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up as with Eagles wings.* Some Naturalists say; the Eagle reneweth her strength by sucking blood when her stomach is so weake that shee cannot feed upon the flesh of her prey. Saints indeed renew their strength as the Eagle, while by faith they sucke the blood of Jesus Christ; and they get cure of their owne weakneses, while they believingly lay hold upon his strength.

Thirdly, We heard in the former verse of a divine warrant issued out for this mans recovery; *Then he is gracious to him, and saith, deliver him.* Here we have the warrant executed; *His flesh shall be fresher then a childes.*

Hence observe.

The commands and warrants of God are effectuell, they shall be obeyed and made good to man.

If God say, deliver him from a sick bed, he shall be delivered; *I will worke* (saith the Lord, *Isa: 43. 13, 14.*) *and who shall let it? for your sake I have sent to Babylon, and have brought downe all their Nobles, or barrs,* as the margin reads it; I will have it done, I will breake all those Nobles who are as barrs in the way of my peoples deliverance. So when the Lord sends his warrant for the delivering of a sick man, he will break all those barrs and bands by which diseases and sicknesses hold him as a prisoner in his bed. Nothing can stand against the word of God: as by a word speaking he gave the creature a being, when it had none (The Lord only spake the word, *Let there be light, let there be a firmament, &c.* and it was

so) Thus also the word or warrant of God reneweth a well-being to those, with whom it is worst, or a comfortable life to those, who are compassed about with the sorrowes of death. The word of God prevailes over all, or is effectuell to every purpose (*Psal: 33. 9.*) *He spake and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast.*

Further, In this restoring of the sick; we have a shadow of the resurrection. The raising of a dying man from his bed, is like the raising of the dead from the grave. The spring of the yeare is a shadow of the resurrection, because then the earth returnes to her youth, and is fresh as a child. In winter all things are dead and desolate, their glosse and beauty is gone; but then cometh the spring and all revives againe, the face of the earth looks fresh, corne and grasse, trees and plants flourish and put forth their buds and blossomes. Now, what the spring of the yeare is to the body of the earth, the same is the returne of health to the body of man; In both we have an exemplar of the resurrection, as also in the regeneration or new birth of the soule, by the power of the holy Ghost. For till then we are, like old sickly men, in the old man, yea we are dead. But no sooner doth the Spirit bring us forth by a second creation into the life of the new man, but we become in spirit fresh like Children, our youth returnes to us againe; that is, we returne to that state wherein we were first created and set up by God in righteousness and true holiness; yea into a better and surer state then that. Man through grace is not only as he was in the first day of his creation, but better; He returnes to the day of his youth, and receives such a youth as shall never decay into old age; yea the older he is in nature, the younger, that is, the stronger and more beautifull he shall be in grace. *He shall* (according to that promise, *Psal: 92. 14.*) *still bring forth fruit in old age, he shall be fat and flourishing.* This renewed youthfulness and flourishing condition of the restored sick man in spiritualls, is specially and fully set forth in the next verse.

For *Elihu* having shewed the recovery of the sick mans body, he proceeds to the recovery of his soule, which eminently returnes to the dayes of its youth, both in the puttings forth of or exercising the grace of God received, and in receiving more grace, favour, and comfort from God, as will appeare in opening the words.

Vers. 26. *He shall pray to God, and he will be favourable to him, and he shall see his face with joy, for he will render to man his righteousness.*

Elihu gave us, before, one meanes of the sick sinfull mans recovery from his bodyly and soule sickness, that was the counsell and instruction given in by the messenger, the interpreter, one of a thousand. And here he sets downe another meanes by which he is restored to both, especially to the sweetness of both.

He shall pray unto God.

The word here used to pray, signifieth not barely to pray, or מְרַבּ multipli-
 put up requests to God; 'Tis a word with an emphasis, implying carit, propriē
 the Multiplying of prayer, and that not the multiplying of prayer verba fortia et
 so much by number, as by weight; the pourcing forth or multi- magnacopia fu-
 plying of strong prayers, or, as it is sayd of Christ, In the dayes of inde וְרַבֵּי
 his flesh (Heb. 5. 7.) the offering up prayers and supplications, supplices.
 with strong crying and teares. There may be a multiplying of Zeph. 3. 10.
 weak insignificant words in the eares of God by prayer; But the
 faithfull people of God, through the Spirit, powre out many strong
 words in prayer (as Christ did in the dayes of his flesh) to him
 who is able to save them from death or danger, and give them
 life. When *Elihu* saith, *He shall pray*, he intends such prayers,
 even the urgency, importunity, or vehemency of the soule in
 prayer. When *Isaac* saw his wife *Rebecca* was long barren (he
 was forty yeares old before he married, and many yeares being
 elapsed in marriage, there was no appearance of Children) Then
 (saith the Text, Gen: 25. 21.) *Isaac intreated the Lord for his*
wife, because shee was barren, and the Lord was entreated of him,
and Rebecca his wife conceived. It cannot be imagined that *Isaac*
 being so holy and gracious a man, had not prayed for that mercy
 before; Doubtless he prayed that God would fulfill the promise
 to his father *Abraham* in giving him a childe: but when he saw
 the promise so long delayed, or stick so long in the birth, then he
 intreated the Lord ('tis this word) he powred out many and strong
 prayers. The word is used againe concerning *Manoah*, after his
 wife had received a promise from the Lord of bearing a Son, af-
 terwards called *Sampson* (Judg: 13. 8.) Then *Manoah* entreated
 the Lord, and sayd, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst
 send,

ſend, come againe unto us, &c. Fearing they might not fully follow the instructions given his wife for the education of their ſon, he earneſtly begged of the Lord further direction in that matter. That prophecy either of the Gentiles to be converted, or of the returne of the diſperſed Jewes, expreſſeth them by this word (*Zeph: 3. 10.*) *From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, my ſuppliants ſhall come; even the daughter of my diſperſed ſhall bring mine offerings.* As if the Prophet had ſayd; They ſhall ſpend themſelves in ſupplications at their returne, they ſhall come with ſtrong petitions, with mighty prayers; as making prayer their buſineſs. They ſhall not come with frozen affections and cold requeſts, but with hearts flaming up in the ardency of their deſires, and urgency of their ſupplications to the Lord. That's the force of the word; *He ſhall pray*; As if *Elihu* had ſayd, He ſhall not come with dead-hearted prayers and petitions, (as many doe in their ſickneſſes and ſorrowes) nor with a formal *Lord have mercy upon me, and helpe me*; but he ſhall make a buſineſs of it, he ſhall pray to purpoſe; he ſhall pray with his whole ſtrength. In which ſence the Lord bid *Ananias* goe to *Saul*, afterwards *Paul* (*Acts 9. 11.*) *For behold he prayeth*; intimating that he had never prayed all his dayes before; nor indeed had he (though being brought up a ſtrict Pharifee, he was much in the forme of prayer) ever prayed in power before.

He ſhall pray.

Some underſtand this, *He*, relating to the meſſenger praying for the ſick man, *He ſhall pray, and God will be favourable to him.* That's a truth, 'tis the worke and duty of the meſſenger to pray for, as well as adviſe the ſick man. But I conceive rather the perſon here intended praying, is the ſick man for himſelfe, who after he hath been counſelled, directed, and adviſed by the meſſenger what to doe, applyeth himſelfe to the doing of it.

Further, Some, who agree that the ſick man is the perſon praying, yet underſtand it of prayer after his recovery; who finding himſelf healed and ſtrengthened prayeth unto God for grace, or for a right uſe of his health & ſtrength. But I rather underſtand it of his prayer unto God in the time of his affliction; who when his ſins and tranſgreſſions have been laid before him by the meſſenger, and his ſoul ſoars ſearched to the bottome, and faithfully dealt with,

with, and so brought to a sight of himselfe, and of his sin, with the sad effects of it visible upon this pained and consumptive body, is then stirred to seek the Lord, and entreat his favour; *He shall pray unto God;*

Hence Note.

Sickness is a prayer-season.

Prayer is a duty never out of season, yet at some times more in season, and most in season in times of affliction; *Is any man afflicted, let him pray,* (James 5. 13.) And among all afflictions the affliction of sickness seemes to be a speciall season calling for this duty. Therefore in the 14 verse of the same Chapter, as soon as he had said, *is any man afflicted, let him pray,* it followeth, *is any sick among you, let him call for the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him;* 'Tis high time for us when sick to look about us, to call in prayer-aide, or helpe from others in prayer; yet 'tis not enough for the afflicted, or the sick to get others to pray for them, they must pray for themselves: some put off the duty of prayer to others, and think it sufficeth if they send bills to ministers or move friends to pray for them. I know sickness indisposeth to prayer, bodily paine and weakness hinder continuance and abiding in the duty; but that doth not excuse the sick from praying for themselves. To desire others to pray for us in bodily sickness, and neglect it our selves is an ill symptome of a sick soul; yea to desire others in that case to pray for us, when we have no heart to pray for our selves, is too cleare a prognostick that their prayers will not profit us, nor be prevailing for us. *Pharaoh*, when under those dreadfull plagues, could send for *Moses* and *Aaron* more then once, and said unto them, *entreat the Lord for me,* (Exod. 9. 27, 28. Chap. 10. 16, 17.) But we read not that he entreated the Lord for himself. *Simon Magnus* when struck with the terrible threatnings of *Peter*, said, *Pray ye to the Lord for me; that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me.* (Acts 8. 24.) But we read not that he prayed for himself. *The prayers of others are rarely beneficiall to any, unlesse they either pray or have a desire to pray for themselves.* *Elihu* represents the sick man praying for himself, *he shall pray*

Unto God. There's the object of prayer.

Hence:

Hence Note.

Prayer in sickness, and in all other cases must be directed unto God, and to him only.

Divine addressees are fit for none but God ; For First, none are worthy of this honour but God ; Prayer is so great a part of that honour and worship which is due to God, that it is often put for his whole worship. *Mine house* (saith the Lord, *Isa.* 56. 7.) *shall be called an house of prayer for all Nations.* Secondly, none can heare, that is, answer prayer but God ; there is no help to be had but in him. As it is his glory to be prayed to, and such a glory as he will not part with to any other, so it is in vaine to pray to any other. *In vaine is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of Mountains* (that is, from the greatest worldly Powers) *truly in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel,* (*Jerem.* 3. 23.) God only was *David's Hills* (*Psal.* 121. 1, 2.) *I Lift my eyes to the hills from whence cometh my helpe* ; what these hills were, himselfe explains in the next verse. *My help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth* ; Baals Priests called upon Baal, they cryed *Baal hear us*, but saith the Text, *there was neither voyce, nor any that answered* (*1 Kings* 18. 26.) It is not only sinfull, but senceless to pray to any other then God alone. That popish Doctrine of invocation to Saints and Angells, is not only a will-worship, but folly and dorage.

Fourthly, *He shall pray, &c.*

Hence Observe.

If we would have any mercy from God, we must ask it.

God is ready to give, but he looks to be intreated, and he will be intreated : What God hath promised to doe for us, his doing of it must be obtained by prayer. Working prayer, worketh the promises to their issue, yea prayer worketh the prophecies, whether of salvation upon *Sion*, or ruine upon *Babylon* to their issue. Promises and prophecies are the expresse will of God, and shall certainly be fullfilled in their season ; yet if we desire their fullfilling, we must pray that he would fullfill them ; and 'tis a token for good that God is about to fullfill them, when the hearts of his people are drawne out much in prayer for their fullfilling. There are some mercies, in the promises, rightly called preventing

ing mercies, they come upon us before we ask ; such is the mercy of our vocation, conversion or turning to God ; we are naturally so far from praying while we are in the state of nature, that we are continually blaspheming or dishonouring the name of God ; but, as for persons converted, (who are eminently called heires of the promise of the good in the promise) if they will have any good of the promise, they must aske it. When the Prophet had declared many prophetesies of good and great and glorious things which God would doe for his people, he concludes with this direction from the Lord. (*Ezek. 36. 37.*) *I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to doe it for them.* As if the Lord had said, *I will not doe these things unasked*, as you looke I should doe these things for you, so I look you should pray unto me that they may be done. A promise was made to *Abraham* (*Gen. 22. 17.*) that his seed should be multiplied as the Stars of Heaven ; now might not *Isaac* his Son have said, God hath promised me children, what need I pray for them ? but *Isaac* knew better, he knew that the promise was to be brought to the birth by prayer, therefore he entreated the Lord that he might have children.

Fifthly, from these words *He shall pray* compared with the next, *and he* (that is God) *will be favourable to him.*

Observe.

The Lord is ready to hear when we pray, ready to give when we ask.

As prayer is honourable and delightfull to God, so, fruitfull to man. *Ask and it shall be given you, seek and you shall find* (*Math. 7. 7.*) *He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him.* Prayer shall not be lost, nor vanish into aire. There was never any faithfull prayer lost ; though the prayers of many have not been answered in kind, that is, they have not had the very thing they asked for ; yet they have had an answer to their prayers ; and though prayer be not alwayes answered in our time, yet there is a time wherein all faithfull prayers shall be answered ; one age reaps the fruit of those prayers which another age hath sowne. The seed time is one age, the harvest in another. Latter Generations get good by the prayers of the former. Though we who pray see not the fruit of it, yet many shall find the fruit of it ; and how

often doth the fruit of prayer appear presently, how often doth the answer come in upon the very putting up of the request? (*Iia. 65. 24.*) *Before they call, I will answer, and while as they are yet speaking, I will hear.* While the word is in their mouth, the mercy shall be put into their hand. While the Church (*Acts 12. 5. 16.*) was praying, *Peter* came in among them. As if God had said, *there's your prayer.* What the Prophet *Elisha* said (*2 Kings 6. 33.*) of the messenger sent to apprehend him; *Is not the sound of his Masters feet behind him?* The same may we say sometimes of this messenger holy and fervent prayer, is not the sound of the mercy prayed for at the very heels of it? Thus close doth *Elihu* put the sick mans prayer and the answer of God, *he shall pray unto God,*

And he will be favourable unto him.

737 *Gracis*
est, *δυσχερής*,
significat vehemēter
velle ac
delectari.
Merc:

That is, he shall have a gracious and a speedy answer; *he will be favourable unto him, or, he will accept him,* as Mr. Broughton renders: 'Tis a very comfortable word, it notes not only to *wish well to, or to be at peace, but to be well pleased with another, yea to be delighted, and take pleasure in him.* 'Tis not barely, to be appeased and reconciled, to lay down wrath and displeasure conceived against a man, but it notes much sweetness of spirit towards him, and full content or complacency in him (*Psal. 149. 4.*) *The Lord taketh pleasure in his people,* (they are as the joy of his heart) *he will beautifie the meek with salvation;* he will not only save them, but adorne them with salvation; they shall not only be delivered (after they have layen among the pots, *Psal. 68. 13.*) from the blackness and filth of their adversity, but they shall have a beauty put upon them, or (as it followeth in that *Psalme* last cited) *They shall be as the wings of a Dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold.* God will be favourable to them, that is, he will give them favours to wear for him, he will put *markee* of honour upon them, they shall not only be benefited, but beautified and crowned with salvation.

God expressed that highest favour and most indeared affection which he bare to his own Son, as serving him, by no better nor more emphaticall word then this (*Isa. 42. 1.*) *Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.* What is, or can be more delightfull to God then his Son? and what can be

be more comfortable to man, then to hear and know, that God delighteth in him, and bears favour to him (through his Son) with the same affection as he doth to his only begotten Son? *He will be favourable unto him.*

Whence note.

First, *God is well pleased with, he is favourable to, and delighted in an humble sinner.*

When a sinner is brought upon his knees and becomes a suppliant, when as he is laid low by affliction, so he lyeth low in prayer and supplication, then the Lord will be favourable to him; and shew his delight in him. The Lord delighteth not in the strength of the horse, he hath not pleasure in the legs of a man (Ps. 147. 10, 11.) No man is favoured by God, because of his outward favour, because he hath a beautifull face, or strong cleane limbs; yea not only hath the Lord no pleasure in any mans legs, but not in any mans braines, how reaching soever, nor in any mans wit how quick soever, nor in any mans judgment how deep soever, nor in any mans tongue how eloquent or well spoken soever, but the Lord *taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy; in those that walk humbly with him, and call upon him.* Let me (saith Christ to his Spouse, Cant. 2. 14.) *hear thy voyce for it is sweet;* he meanes it not of an artificiall singing voyce, but of a spirituall praying voyce. That's the musick which the Church makes for Christ. Nothing is so tunable nor takes the eare and heart of Christ, like the voyce of prayer and praise from a gracious heart. All the beauties and rarities both of persons and things are dull and flat, yea wearisome and loathsome to God in comparison of a gracious, honest, humble soul. Princes have their favourites (they are according to the language of this Text) favourable to some above many, either because they are beautifull and goodly persons, or because they are men of excellent speech, prudence and comportment. All godly men are Gods Favourites, he is favourable to them not only above many men in the world; but above all the men of this world, who have their portion in this life; And he therefore favours them; because they are the purchase of his Son, and the workmanship of his Spirit, convincing them of, and humbling them for their sins; as also creating them after God in righteousness and true holiness. *Such shall be his favourites.*

Secondly, Consider the coherence or dependance of these words, *He shall call unto God, and he will be favourable unto him.* Whereas, before, all his complainings and outcries stood him in no stead, now being humbled effectually, and taking hold of the righteousness shewed and offered him by the Messenger of God, he no sooner makes suit to God but is heard.

Hence Note.

God first shewes regard to the person, then to the offering, to prayers and services.

This truth may be understood two wayes, First in reference to the state of grace. When *Abel* and *Cain* brought their sacrifices or offerings, God had respect to *Abel's* offering, but to *Cain* and his offering had no respect, (*Gen. 4. 4, 5.*) *Abel* was in a state of grace, *Cain* was not, so the Apostle states their case, (*Heb. 11. 4.*) *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he (his person) was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and what did he testify? surely that his gifts were brought in faith, and were presented from a principle of grace, which Cain had not; and therefore God did not approvingly testify of his gifts. Till we close with God by faith, God doth not close with our services by acceptance.* Secondly, as this is true in reference to the state of grace, so in reference to somewhat in the present actings or dispositions of those who are gracious. 'Tis possible for a godly man to act so sinfully, and to be so ill disposed to the frame of his heart, that God may seem to deny acceptation to his prayers, and services. *David* said (*Psal. 66. 18.*) *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare me.* And God told the Jewes, his Covenant people, (*Isa. 1. 15.*) *When ye make many prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of blood.* Thus while they who have a state interest in Christ, walke unworthy of it, they are under the frownes of God, and his dis-acceptation of all their duties, till they renew their repentance and humble themselves. And I conceive this was the case of the sick man in the Text (in whom doubtlesse, he aimed at *Job*) whom *Elihu* granted to be a godly man, yet under great distempers of spirit, which must be healed & removed before he could so call upon or pray unto God, as he would be favourable to him, or give him testimonie of his favour. Thus

we

we see, in both these references, how the person of a man must be respected and in favour before his prayers can. For as we can have no benefit by the intercession of Christ, till we accept his person, so God will not give us any benefit by our supplications, till himself accepteth our persons, which he doth only in Christ. Many would be saved by Christ, they would be pardoned and get to heaven, they would enjoy the benefits and priviledges which he hath purchased for his people, if they neglect Christ himself; nor doe they think of closing with his person. Now, I say, as unlesse we have respect to the person of Christ, and desire union with him, we have nothing to doe with his benefits; so unless God hath respect to our persons, we get no benefit, no answer of our prayers.

Thirdly, Note.

To have the favour of God, or to be accepted with him, is the top and summe of all desireable favours.

'Tis the Alpha and Omega, the first and last of all other favours, to find God favourable to us; if God be favourable to us, it matters not much who frowns upon us, or what foul weather we meet with in this world. And, as to be in his favour should be the chief of all our desires, so to be assured of his favour should be the chief of all our studies and cares (2 Cor. 5. 9.) *Herein* (saith the Apostle) *we labour, that whether present or absent we may be accepted of him.* The word notes to labour ambitiously; as if he had said, we labour as much for the favour of God, as ever any of the sons of ambition laboured for: the favour of Princes, or regard with the Kings of this world. No man ever plotted or flatter'd and crouched so much to the Kings of the earth for favour, as we doe to God for favour; *herein we labour.* We make it our business to be accepted with him; if God once accept a man, you may turne him loose, he will shift for one. How compleately happy the condition of such a favourite is, will appeare yet further in opening the next clause of this verse.

And he shall see his face with joy.

When once God is favourable to a poor sinner, then he shall be *used or dealt with like a favourite.* Great Favourites stand in the presence of Princes, and frequently see their faces. Whomsoever

ſoever any man favours he freely admits to his preſence, and takes delight in his company. Thus *Elihu* ſpeaks of Gods Favourite, *He ſhall ſee his face with joy.*

There is a twofold interpretation of theſe words tending both to the ſame ſpiritual ſence.

Videbit deus faciem ejus cum lætitia, i.e. hilariter cum inuebitur, vultu læto et facili-um respiciet, cum onto vultum iratus avertet.

Merc:

Fiſt, Some by the Antecedent *He*, underſtand God himſelfe, and by *his face* the face of the ſick and ſad man; and ſo the ſence of this aſſertion, *he ſhall ſee his face with joy*, is plainly, this. God will look cheerfully and ſmilingly upon the face of this poor ſuppliant; God will look upon him, as we doe upon friends whom we favour and have much reſpect for. Friends may ſee content and joy ſhining in or ſtampt upon our faces, when we look them in the face. The content which we take in ſeeing the face of another is viſible in the ſmiles and joyes of our own faces. As when we look ſowrely, angrily, ſorrowfully, ſullenly upon a man, when darkneſs is ſeen in our faces, and clouds gather in our brows, ready to diſſolve into a ſtorme, this ſpeaks we beare him no good will, or rather that we bear him much diſpleaſure. So when we looke pleaſantly upon a man, doth it not ſay, that we are highly pleaſed with him? To be ſure, when God is at peace with a repenting ſinner, he no longer frownes upon him, nor turns his face from him as an enemy, but entertaines and welcomes him as a friend; which is directly oppoſite to *Jobs* apprehenſion of God at the 10th verſe of this Chapter, *Behold he findeth occaſions againſt me, he counteth me for his enemy.* This is a ſweet ſoul-reviving and raviſhing truth. God beholds the face of his people with joy, he beholds them ſmilingly, cheerfully, delightfully. *David* calls it *The light of Gods countenance* (Pſal. 4. 6.)

Et videbit (homo) faciem dei cum júbilo.

Merc:

Secondly, (and I rather conceive that to be the meaning of the place) moſt relate the *He*, to the ſick man; who having been upon his knees humbling himſelf before God, and finding God favourable to him, he then ſeeth his face, that is, the face of God, with joy. God fills his ſoule with a great deale of peace, comfort, and ſweetneſs in his approaches to him. Before, poſſibly, if he did but think upon God, he was troubled as *Aſaph* found (Pſal. 77. 3.) *I remembered God, and was troubled.* To a man in great trouble, eſpecially in trouble of mind, the very thoughts of God (who is our only help in trouble) may be troubleſom; but when he is ſet right and reſtored to the favour of God, or God being again

favour-

favourable unto him, he beholds his face with abundance of joy. Here are yet two things to be opened, or two Queries may be made and answered for the clearing of these words.

First, What is meant by the *face of God*; Secondly, what is meant by *seeing his face*.

To the former query, I answer; First, the face of God is the essentiall being or perfect Majesty of God, of which himself saith to Moses (*Exod. 33. 23.*) *My face shall not be seen.* Secondly, the good will and favour of God is his face (*Pf. 80. 3.*) *Cause thy face to shine,* (that is, be good to us) *and we shall be saved.* Thirdly, the *face of God* in Scripture is put for any manifestations of God to man. God manifesteth himself in wrath to some men, (*Psal. 34. 16.*) *The face of the Lord is against them that doe evil;* *Facies dei iram, quandoque favorem notat.* That is, he is angry and greatly displeased with them. He manifesteth himself in love to others, and all such are said either (as Drusi in the Text) to see his face, or (as other Texts express it) to have his face shining upon them. God is a spirit, he hath no face properly; but as the face of a man is that, by which he is knowne (if a man hide his face we know not who he is, though we see all the other parts of his body, he is a concealed man) so that whatsoever it is, by which God is clearly knowne, that in Scripture language is called his face. And hence Thirdly, the worship and holy ordinances of God, are called the face of God (*Gen. 4. 14.*) because they are great manifestations of God, or because God is manifested in his Ordinances, in his word and worship, who and what he is. After a sick man, through the help of God, is recovered; he goes into the congregation to give thanks; and then he may be said to see the face of God, because there he exhibits the signs of his presence, & doth as it were shew his face. There as in a glasse we behold the face of God, that is, the discoveries of his holiness, of his love & goodness; The face of God is seen in his works, as the Apostle teacheth us; (*Rom. 1. 20.*) *The invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternall power and godhead:* much more in his word and Ordinances, and above all in Jesus Christ is God seen and manifested. Jesus Christ is the face of God, the brightnesse of his glory, the expresse image of his person, (*Heb. 1. 3.*) *The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shineth to us in the face of Christ.* Thus the face of God is beheld in
the

the face of Christ. There we may see how holy, how just, how good, and mercifull God is ; all this glory of God appeareth to us in the face of Christ, who is the highest manifestation of God. Here in the Text by the face of God, we are to understand any demonstration of Gods favourable presence ; in which sence of the word, *Aaron* was to blesse the children of *Israel* (*Numb. 6. 25.*) *The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.* That is, the Lord manifest himself to thee in wayes of grace and peace, in favour and in mercy. *David* prayed in the same stile (*Psal. 67. 1.*) *God be mercifull to us, and bless us, and cause his face to shine upon us ;* that is, give us tokens and pledges of his favour.

Secondly, *How see we the face of God ?* Doth not God tell *Moses*, *No man can see my face and live.* How then can the face of God be seene ?

I answer ; The face of God (which was touched before) as taken for the essence of God, or for his essentiall glory, cannot be seene ; That's too transcendent a glory for man to behold. What we see of God is but some ray or beaming out of light and glory from himselfe, we cannot see himselfe. The essentiall or personall glory of God, is that face which cannot be seene, but the declarative glory of God is a face of God which may be clearely seene by faith in the light of his word and workes. And to see the face of God, is nothing else but for a man to *know in himselfe* (as the Apostles word is in somewhat a parallel case, *Heb. 10. 34.*) that God is gracious to him, that is, to have an assurance of his favour, or a reflect act of faith about it. The holy Spirit sheweth us what God is, and what the things of God are (*1 Cor. 2. 12.*) *We have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God ;* that is, that we may be enlightened with the knowledge of the grace, goodness, and favour of God to us discovered in the Gospel. The Spirit sheweth us this blessed face of God, and we see it by the actings of our faith ; all our visions of God in this life are visions of faith ; upon whose wings all our intellectuall powers soare aloft and are carried up to God. Faith is not only a worke of the will in consent and application, but a worke of the understanding by assent and knowledge. Thus we see

see God (as a Spirit is only to be seene) with a spirituall eye.
The vision of God is intellectuall, the vision of faith. Thus the
reconciled sinner finding God favourable to him; he *seeth his*
face

*Videre faciem
dei, nihil aliud
est quam senti-
re apud ani-
mum suum de-
um propitium.*

with joy.

Coc:
In Jubilo. i.e.
in quodam in-
explicabili
gaudio.
Aquino:

The word signifies joyfull acclamation, or shouting for joy,
such as men use after great favours done them and benefits or
rather bounties bestowed upon them. There is a seeing of the
face of God with terror; so the wicked shall see God, that is,
they shall have manifestations of Gods displeasure; they shall be
made to see him with shame and sorrow: They shall say (when
they see him) to the *mountaines and rockes, fall on us, and hide us*
from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath
of the Lambe. They who never saw the face of God with joy,
shall see it with horror & amazement. Saints see it with joy, they
have unexpressible comfort and contentment in beholding God;
they shall rejoyce with shouting, as in the yeare of *Jubile*, when
they sounded out their joyes with trumpets, or made a joyfull
noyse. 'Tis no ordinary but a triumphant joy, with which the god-
ly see the face of God. Extraordinary sights affect with extraor-
dinary joy. Now the face of God being the highest and most
glorious sight in the world, it must needs affect the beholder
with a glorious with a *Jubilean joy.* *He shall see his face with*
joy.

First, It being sayd, *He shall see his face with joy*, upon his
prayer, and the humbling of himselfe before God.

Observe.

*God hides or vayles his face, till we humble our soules and seeke
his face.*

God will not be seene at all times, no not by his owne people;
There are severall cases in which he turneth away his face in an-
ger, or drawes a curtaine (as it were) yea a cloud between him-
selfe and the soule. And this he doth, First, and most usually to
try his people, how they can beare his withdrawings, and to
see whether or to what they will betake themselves, when he
takes himselfe so much from them, that they cannot see him.
Secondly, He doth it often to chasten and correct man for sin.

To be under the hidings of Gods face, is the saddest effect of sin to a sensible or an awakened soule. *David* made a grievous complaint because of this, what ever the cause or occasion of it was. (*Psal: 13. 1.*) The absence of God from him (though possibly but for a short time) was so tedious to him, that he cryed out, *How long wilt thou forget me, O Lord, for ever? How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?* Even *Jesus Christ* while he stood in the place of sinners, bare the hiding of his fathers face, as the summe of all those punishments which were due to and deserved by our sin. This pressed him more then all bodily sufferings, and made him cry out, while he hung upon the Crosse, *My God, my God* (not why hast thou left me to be crucified, but) *why hast thou forsaken me* (*Math: 27. 46.*) Thirdly, God hideth his face from some, because the manifestations of it have not been received thankfully, nor improved rightly. We ought to give thanks for the light of the Sun shining in the ayre, and also doe our worke in it; Is it any wonder if God cloud and eclipse the light of his countenance towards those, who neither prize it, nor improve it? If you would alwayes see the face of God, then be ye alwayes seene at the worke and in the wayes of God.

Secondly, Observe.

It is the sole priviledge of Gods Favourites, or of those to whom he is favourable, to see his face.

As no man can see that face of God, his essentiall presence, so none but Godly men shall see this face of God, his comfortable or blessed-making presence. *Without holiness no man shall see the Lord* (*Heb: 12. 14.*) There is a two-fold vision or sight of God, and that negative assertion may be understood of either or of both. There's first, a vision of God on earth; thus we see his face, as was shewed before, in the actings of faith; For though the Apostle opposeth these two, faith and sight; *We walke by faith, and not by sight* (*2 Cor: 5. 7.*) yet faith hath its sight; we walke not by sight as the worldly men walk, who doe as they see, and make their eyes both the guide of their consciences, and the in-bringers of their comforts; we walke not by outward sight, nor doe we make conclusions how to guide our conversations, by what we see. We walke by faith, and that's the sight which we have of God while we are here on earth, which cannot possibly be with-

our holiness; faith being so great a part of our holiness, and (by drawing vertue from Christ dayly) the maintainer of it all. Secondly, there is a sight of the face of God in glory. And if none can enter into glory but holy men, then no man without holiness can see the face of God there. Thus Christ saith of the Angells, *They alwayes behold the face of my father which is in heaven* (*Math: 18. 10.*) Now we see the face of God darkly as in a glasse (*1 Cor: 13. 12.*) that is, in his word and workes, in his ordinances and appoyntments; in these we have glimpses of the face of God; but *we shall see him face to face*; that is, as fully and comprehensively as creatures can; we can never comprehend God, but we shall have comprehensions of God so farre, as finite can take in the fruitions of Infinite. *We shall see his face with joy.*

Thirdly, Note.

It is the greatest joy and happiness of man imaginable to see the face of God.

Any manifestation of God is a joyfull favour, and a full manifestation of him fills the heart with joy; *Lord lift up the light of thy countenance upon us* (saith David, *Psal: 4. 6, 7.*) *thou hast put gladness in my heart more then in the time their corne and wine increased*; As if he had sayd, I rejoyce in thy favour more then worldlings doe in their best enjoyments. *Shew us the father and it sufficeth us*, sayd Philip (*John 14. 8.*) let us have but that favour, and we desire no more; we have enough, we can have no more, if we may but *see the father*. True joy stands not in any sights, nor in the sight of any thing here below, but in the sight of God above while we are below, and in a hope that we shall at last get above too, and there have an everlasting sight of him, *in whose presence is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures for evermore*. We read in the Leviticall Law, *of the shewbread*, which was to be set in the holy place, upon a Table (*Exod: 25. 30.*) The Hebrew is, *the bread of faces*. There are two reasons of this denomination; First, Because that Bread did shew the gracious provision that God made for them all the way they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan, or that he spread a Table for them in the wilderness where they had no harvest; To which the Prophet may allude (*Jer: 2. 2.*) *I remember* (saith the Lord)

the kindness of thy youth, the love of thy espousals, when thou wentest after me in a land that was not sowne; that is, when thou didst trust me for thy dayly bread. Secondly, It was called the *shew-bread*, to testify the speciall presence of God with them, and that his eye was alwayes upon them, ready to do them good upon all occasions. This was the high priviledge of the Jewes then, they had the *bread of faces*; and this is the joy of the people of God now, that what ever good they have, it is the face of God to them; their bread is the *bread of faces*, and their wine is the wine of faces, &c. that is, they are a signification of the favour and love of God to them, or they look upon the love and favour of God manifested in these things, much more then upon the things themselves. Now if it be so great a mercy to have some manifestation of the face or favour of God, or that we are alwayes in the sight and view of God; What will it be to us when we shall alwayes abide in the presence of God, and see his face with joy?

Lastly, Note.

* *A justified person hath confidence to looke up to and thinke of God; He doth it with joy; and that's the fruit of a well-grounded confidence.*

where the Spirit of the Lord is (saith the Apostle, 2 Cor: 3. 17.) there is liberty, a liberty of address and approach to God, a liberty also of speech and prayer to God. True godliness hath much well regulated boldness with God; and as a Godly man ought with reverence, so he can with a well-grounded confidence looke God in the face.

For he will render unto man his righteousness.

This latter part of the verse giveth an account of the ground of that joy which the sick man found in seeing the face of God. He shall see his face with joy (saith Elisha) for he (that is, God) shall render unto man his righteousness.

וַיִּשָּׂא אֶרְצוֹ
שׁוּב

He shall render; The Hebrew is, he will make to returne; The word signifieth, First, to returne to a place from whence we have departed (Gen: 18. 10.) Secondly, to return or turn from that displeasure which was once conceived. When the Lord, is, as it were, in a hot pursuit of sinners, he returns or turns from his anger. The Prophet speakes in the negative (Isa: 5. 25.) For all this

this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched-out still, or he is not returned from his anger. Thirdly, The word is used to note mans return unto God by repentance (*Deut: 30. 28.*) We by sin turn away from God, and by repentance we return to him. Fourthly, It signifieth to returne by way of requitall (*Psal: 116. 12.*) *What shall I render unto the Lord* (It is this word) or, *What shall I return to the Lord for all his benefits?* David was in an holy muse or maze, what testimony of thankfulness he should bring to the Lord. *What shall I render?* And in that sence it is attributed both to God and man; sometimes in relation to evill done, and then it notes to render punishment or revenge (*Psal: 28. 4.*) *Render to them their desert*, so the word is used by Josephs brethren (*Gen: 50. 15.*) *He will certainly require us all the evill which we did unto him*; they were jealous of their brothers love when their father was dead. And as it notes a return of evill done in way of revenge, so also a return of good done in way of reward, thus here.

He will render unto man.

It is an indefinite assertion, not to this or that man, but to man. *With God there is no respect of persons, but he that worketh righteousness* (let him be who he will) *is accepted of him.* To man, that is, to every man God will render

his righteousness.

Righteousness is of two sorts; First, There is the righteousness of our sanctification, which consists; First, in our turning from or leaving to doe evill; Secondly, in our doing good: this is a righteousness wrought by us and dwelling or inherent in us. The Hebrewes by this word often expresse that which we call *almes* or *charity*; and the reason is two-fold, why almes or acts of charity are expressed by that word which signifieth righteousness; First, because our charity or our almes must be given of those things that are rightly gotten. We must not doe unjustly that we may be charitable, nor wrong some to relieve others. Secondly, because charity and almes is a due or right to the poor that are in want; we call it charity, but it is a work of duty (*Prov: 3. 27.*) therefore 'tis well expressed by *righteousness*. He shall render unto man *his righteousness* or *beneficence*. We may take it in this large

Redder iuſtiti-
am. i. e. præ-
mium iuſtitia.
Druf:

large ſence ; for this alſo is a part of our ſanctification. And when it is ſayd, he will render unto man *his righteouſneſs*, we are not to underſtand it of righteouſneſs in kinde, but of the reward or fruit of his righteouſneſs. For here *Elihu* ſpeaks of a perſon already righteous, or at leaſt of him who had repented of and turned from his unrighteouſneſs. So that, to *returne* or render unto man *his righteouſneſs*, is to returne the mercy promiſed to thoſe that are righteous. For as iniquity or unrighteouſneſs is often put for the puniſhment of unrighteouſneſs ; ſo equity or righteouſneſs is often put for the reward of righteouſneſs, or for that which God according to his righteous promiſe returnes unto a righteous perſon. Thus we may underſtand *Elihu* here. As if he had ſayd, *God dealt with this man before, as with a ſinner, or he afflicted him for his ſin ; But now he will deale kindly with him as with a righteous perſon, and removing his affliction, and taking his hand off from him, he will render his righteouſneſs to him, he will not reckon with him for any former unrighteouſneſs.*

From this notion of the word, Obſerve.

God uſually deals with men as they are, and according to what they doe.

If a godly man ſin he ſhall ſmart for it ; and if a ſinner return and repent, God will ſhew him kindneſs. Though the mercy and kindneſs which God ſhews to a returning ſinner, be not for his returnings or repentings, yet 'tis according to them. The favour which God ſheweth any man is for Chriſts ſake, or for what Chriſt hath done and ſuffered ; but it is according to what himſelfe hath done or ſuffered. *David* experienced this himſelfe (*Pſal: 18. 20.*) *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteouſneſs, &c.* That is, as I have been a righteous and juſt perſon, ſo the Lord hath dealt with me. And he gives the rule with reſpect to all others (*v. 25.*) *With the upright thou wilt ſhew thy ſelfe upright, with the pure thou wilt ſhew thy ſelfe pure, &c.* That is, Thou wilt be ſuch to men in thy diſpenſations, as they are in their converſations and diſpoſitions, in the frame and bent of their hearts and lives. And as it followeth (*v. 27.*) *Thou wilt ſave the afflicted (or humble) people ; but wilt bring downe high lookes ;* that is, thoſe that are proud and high-minded. The Prophet holds out the ſame truth in way of direction (*Iſa: 3. 10.*) *Say ye to the righteous, it ſhall be*

be well with him, for they shall eat of the fruit of their doings; that is, they shall have good for the good they have done, or according to the good which they have done. (*Rom. 2. 10.*) *Glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile.*

If any object; But may it not be ill with men that doe good and are good? doth the Lord alwayes render to man according to his righteousness.

I answer; It is well at present with most that doe well; look over all the sons of men, and generally ye shall find that usually the better they are, the better they live.

Secondly, I answer; It shall be well with all that doe well in the issue, and for ever. This truth will abide to eternity; *God will render unto man according to his righteousness.*

Secondly, We may take the word *righteousness*, for the righteousness of justification; Mr Broughton inclines to that sence, *He will restore unto man his justice.* And presently adds by way of glosse; *Justice is Christ*; It is Christs Justice or righteousness that is restored to man. Christ is indeed *The Lord our righteousness* (*Jer. 23. 6.*) And thus severall others of the learned expound these words. *He will render unto man his righteousness*; That is, he will bestow upon him or restore to him righteousness in Christ; he will account him righteous, though he hath no righteousness of his owne which will hold in Gods account. *Elihu*, I grant, calleth it *Mans righteousness, his righteousness*; yet we may well understand him calling it so; not because it is wrought by but because it is imputed to or bestowed upon man as his righteousness. *That is ours which is freely given us*, so is righteousness in justification by faith in Christ. We have no righteousness wrought in us or by us, for that purpose; but we have a righteousness wrought for us, and freely bestowed upon us, for that purpose, which is therefore truly called *mans righteousness*.

But some may question; how can it be sayd; that God doth render or return to man this righteousness, that is, the righteousness of justification? Can this righteousness be lost? can a person justified fall out of a justified state?

I answer; The righteousness of justification (which is true also of the righteousness of sanctification) as to the substance and being of it cannot be lost; But it may be lost as to the comfortable

*Non enim ablata
justitia red-
ditur sed abla-
ta justitia sen-
sum.* Coc:

ble enjoyments and fruits of it, or as to our apprehension of it ; And the Lord is sayd to returne to man the righteousness of his justification, not as if the grace it selfe were lost or taken away from him, but because the sight and sence of it, the sweetness and joy of it, the workings and effects of it having been lost, are now restored to him againe. When the Lord by his Spirit gives the soule a cleare and fresh evidence of it, or reneweth the testimony of his Spirit with our spirits, that our sins are forgiven, and that we are justified, beloved, and accepted in Christ, then the Lord is sayd to render unto man his righteousness ; otherwise, neither the faith, by which this righteousness is applyed, nor the righteousness it selfe which is applyed to us by faith, is at any time lost or removed. Only in this sence, as in many other Scriptures, so in this, the Lord is sayd to render unto man his righteousness, both of sanctification and justification. For, when a beleever through sin hath blotted his own evidences, and God hath left him under the darkness of his own spirit, for his negligent, unwatchfull & unworthy walking ; or when the Lord hideth his face, to try him what he will doe, whether *he will trust in his name while he walketh in darkness and seeth no light* ; when, I say, after withdrawings for either of these reasons or for any other the Lord gives him in a renewed evidence of his love, then he is sayd to *render unto man his righteousness*. It is in this case as with a man that labours under some strong and dangerous disease, which taketh away his senses, and leaves him halfe dead ; we say, the man is gone, yet he recovers, his speech returnes, and his spirits revive, and then we say, *his life is rendred to him*, or he is brought back from the grave, we have fetched him againe ; not that his life was quite taken away (for he was not a carkasse in that condition, a body without a soule) but his life was, for that time, withdrawne, there was no appearance of it, no sensible breathing, no motion, no vitall visible operation. Thus we may conceive what is meant by the rendring unto man *his righteousness*.

Hence observe.

First, *A justified person is a righteous person.*

He hath a clothing of righteousness ; that which we call *his righteousness*, is not properly but imputedly his. It is not a cloathing of his owne making, but made for him and bestowed freely upon

upon him. (*Rom: 10. 3.*) *They being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and going about to establish their owne righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God.* It is Gods righteousness not our owne, and yet it is our owne as well as the righteousness of God, it being imputed and reckoned unto us for our righteousness; it is the believers righteousness as given to him, it is Christs righteousness as wrought by him.

Secondly, Observe.

A justified person under great afflictions and temptations often looseth the comfortable sight and sence of his owne righteousness.

And so may look upon himselfe as an unrighteous person, as having no righteousness, or as being unreconciled & unjustified. For, as many bold sinners & hypocrites presume they have a righteousness when they have none, and boast themselves to be in the number of the justified when they are not. So many an afflicted and tempted soule, who is indeed justified in the sight of God, may be unjustified in his owne. Great afflictions have an appearance of divine displeasure, which stands most opposite to justification. As affliction is a kinde of darkness, so it often leaves the soule in much darkness. And he that is in the dark is full of feare, he is apt to question his state, whether he hath any thing of God in him or no. For though it be not good for a Christian alwayes to begin to live, he should come to a poynt, and labour for a certainty; yet some are brought to such a pass that their former evidences and experiences are even dead and lye prostrate, and they constrained to begin a new reckoning about their spirituall estate, or, as it were, to begin againe to live.

Thirdly, Note.

Mans righteousness or justification, is as lost to him when he wants the evidence, that is, the comfort, sweetness, and peace of it.

When his soul-state is so ravel'd and intangled, that he can make nothing of it, then his righteousness is as lost. *Those things which appeare not, are to us as if they were not. Not to know what we have, is a degree of not having.* When grace doth not act or is not used, we are sayd in Scripture to lack grace, or to have none. (*2 Pet: 1. 9.*) *But he that lacketh these things is blind, and can-*

not see afar off. The whole context carrieth it of believers, who are in a state of grace, who yet not using grace are sayd to lack it, and are called blinde, as not able to see afar off; how it was with them when the work of conversion first began, & so have upon the matter forgotten that they were ever purged from their old sins. That is, they act as a man that hath never had any acquaintance with God, or knew so much as the meaning of *repentance from dead workes*. He, in the Gospel, who had but one talent and did not use it, is sayd to have none, *From him that hath not shall be taken away even that he hath* (Math: 25. 29.) 'Tis a strange expression to say, that shall be taken away from a man which he hath not; yet the idle servant is sayd not to have that one talent which he had, because he did not use it, but layd it by as a dead stocke. Now, as in reference unto the grace of sanctification in us, when we doe not act, we are sayd to lack it, or not to have it, so in reference to the peace of justification, when we have not the comfort of it, we are sayd to be without it. And therefore when peace is restored to the soule, righteousness or justification is restored also.

Further, from the connexion of these words, *He shall see his face with joy; for he will render unto man his righteousness*.

Note, Fourthly.

When the sight of our righteousness or justified state in Christ returns to us, our comforts returne.

We may be justified or in a justified state, and not rejoyce. But if we know we are in a state of justification, we cannot but rejoyce. It will make a man rejoyce to purpose, when he seeth the righteousness of justification is clearely his (Isa: 45. 25.) *Surely shall one say in the Lord have I righteousness and strength: One shall say this: He shall not only have righteousness in the Lord, but he shall say he hath; that is, he shall be able to make it out; he shall have the light of it upon his spirit, and then as it followeth in the Prophet; In him shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory.* When they are able to say this, then they shall not only rejoyce but glory. Glorifying is the height of joy, or joy is in its full strength. The Apostle saith (Rom: 14. 17.) *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink (What is it then?) but righteousness (and what else?) peace and joy in the holy Ghost.*

Righte-

Righteousness brings in peace, that's the first fruit ; The warre is ended, the controversie determined between God and the soule, and when once peace is entred, joy will follow. It is usuall to make triumphs, when, a formerly broken, peace is made between two nations. When *Abimelech* sent commissioners to make a covenant of peace with *Isaac*, the holy Story saith (*Gen: 26. 30.*) *He made them a feast, and they did eate and drinke.* Surely when God sends his holy Spirit to speake peace to a troubled soule (against whom his terrors have been set in array (as *Job* sayd in his own case, Chap: 6. 4.) and the arrowes of the Almighty within him have drunke up his spirit) he (I say) having his peace thus restored to him, cannot but have the joy of the Lord restored to him, as *David* prayed his might (*Psal: 51. 12.*) *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation ;* That is, shew me that I am justified, that my sin is pardoned ; this will bring back into my bosome the joy of thy salvation, and my drooping soul shall be not only refreshed but feasted as with marrow and fatness. Joy is a certaine consequent upon the sight of our justification ; Yea joy is not only a consequent, but a fruit and effect of it ; joy floweth out of the nature of it ; nor is it ever interrupted or suspended, but upon the hiding of righteousness out of our sight. And therefore joy returns unfayleably when the Lord is pleased thus to render unto man his righteousness.

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 27, 28, 29, 30.

He looketh upon men, and if any say, I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profiteth me not :

He will deliver his soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.

Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man,

To bring back his soule from the pit, and to be enlightned with the light of the living.

WE had the blessed issue of the Lords dealing with the sick sinner in the former verse. Now, in the two first verses of this context, we have the same case and issue put in generall with reference to any man. And in the two latter, *Elihu* recapitulates or summes up the whole matter, and then applyeth it to *Job* personally and particularly in the three last verses of the Chapter.

He looketh upon men, &c.

*Qui a radice
in inspexit,
intentus et fixus
oculis intuitus
est.*

The word notes a strict beholding and fixing both of the outward and inward eye, that of the mind, with that of the body. 'Tis here, after the manner of men, attributed to God ; He marks and animadverts upon men, how it is with them, or how they stand disposed and affected.

Yet there is a difference among interpreters, who is the antecedent to the word *He*. *He looketh upon men*. The doubt or question is to whom this relative pronowne, *He* hath respect ; whether to God or to the sick man lately spoken of.

Some understand it chiefly of the sick man recovered. *He looketh upon men* ; That is, the sick man looketh upon those about him ; and saith, *I have sinned and perverted that which is right*. As if being raised from his sick bed, he should raise himselfe up, to give glory to God by confessing and acknowledging before men, that he had sinned in perverting the rule of righteousness given him to walke by, and had found by dear-bought experience, that it profited him not. The Italian translator saith, *He afterwards*

*Qui hoc modo
afflictus fuit,
resipiscens in-
venit homines
et dicitur.*
Drus.

shall

shall turne himselfe towards man, and say, &c. That is, he shall preach Gods grace to sinfull man, and propose himselfe an example of it, magnifying the grace of God to him, and acknowledging his owne vileness. They who insist upon this exposition render the 28th verse, as the continued speech of the sick man, making it out to this effect, *I have sinned and perverted that which was right, yet he hath delivered, or will deliver my soule from going into the pit, and my life shall see the light.*

It must be granted, that to look upon or behold man, is in Scripture, a descriptive periphrasis or circumlocution, expressing a man recovered from some dangerous & deadly sickness. And therefore when *Hezekiah* thought his sickness was to death, and his case desperate; He thus bemoaned himselfe (*Isa. 38. 11.*) *I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world.* But, saith *Elisha*, the sick man being perfectly recovered, talkes with and looks upon men; And the first discourse he issueth, is a confession of repentance for his iniquity; *I have sinned, I have perverted that which was right, and it profiteth not*: And his next is a confession of praise for his recovery; *He hath delivered, or I am assured he will deliver my soule from going downe to the pit, and my life shall see the light.* This is a profitable exposition; and much insisted upon by some very learned interpreters, and therefore I shall make a little improvement of it by this brieve observation.

It is our duty, being recovered from sickness; to confess and make knowne the goodness of God and our sinfulness to those that are about us.

There is a three-fold confession; First, of faith, that we believe what God hath revealed and promised to doe for us, Secondly, of prayse, that we thankfully acknowledge what God hath done for us according to his promise. Thirdly, of repentance, that we are heartily sorrowfull for and bewaile, what we have done against the command of God. We should be ashamed to sin before men, but let us not be ashamed to confesse our sinfulness, and (in some cases) our speciall sins before men. Though we neither impose nor extort particular confessions from men (as the Papists doe) yet it is good for men who have been under the afflicting hand of God, and have had great experience of his mercy in raising them

up, to declare what God hath done both for soule and body, that others may be bettered by their experiences.

But I shall not stay upon this, because our translation (which is cleare and safe) runs another way, making the antecedent to this *he*, to be God; *He*; that is, God *looketh upon men*, and saith, *If any say, I have sinned, and have perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not, Then (as it followeth) He will deliver him from going downe to the pit, and his life shall see the light.* The fence of the context in Generall, is plaine; *God looketh upon men, and if he seeth them penitent, he will have mercy upon them, and deliver them, or give them that which is better then bodily deliverance.* More distinctly.

He looketh upon men.

It is the work of God at all times to look upon men; and he looketh so upon all men, as if he had but one man to look upon. His look upon men is not a bare look, but a considering, and an observing look. He so looks upon men, that he looks through them. He looks upon them, and takes notice what they are, how it is with them, what they are doing, and at what they are driving. He looks upon them to consider both the frame of their hearts, and the course of their lives; yea his looking is an expecting: he so looketh upon man, as looking for somewhat from man, or as desiring to see somewhat in him. Though God hath no need of us, nor of any thing we can doe, yet he looketh, waiteth, or hath an expectation, of somewhat to be done by us. He looketh upon sick men, to see how they take it; with what patience they beare affliction, what the workings of their hearts are, what their repentings, what the actings of their faith; such things as these the Lord looketh for from most men, mostly from men under the rod, under sad & sorrowfull dispensations. And the words following shew what it is expressly which the Lord looketh for. Yet before I open them, note in generall.

God loves to see occasion of doing good to man.

What we love to doe, we love the opportunities of doing it. The Lord is good, and he loveth to doe good, and therefore he is expressed as one troubled when he wants, & as one pleased when he hath the occasions of doing it. We may take up that sence eminently

nently from that most patheticall wish (*Psal. 81. 13, 14, 15, 16.*) *O that my people had hearkned unto me, and Israel had walked in my wayes, I should soone have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries. The haters of the Lord, should have submitted themselves, but their time should have endured for ever: I should have fed them also with the finest of the wheate, &c.* As if the Lord had sayd, How glad should I have been if my people had been but fitly qualified to give me occasion of removing all evill from them, and of doing them all manner of good: The holy Prophet speakes the heart of God in the same readinesse (*Isa. 30. 18.*) *Therefore will the Lord wait that he may be gracious unto you, therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you.* As if he had sayd, The Lord expects your reformation, that he may not proceed in rigour against you, or as some conceive rather, he only delayeth his putting an end to your troubles, till ye are humbled, expecting a seasonable time to shew you that mercy, in bestowing of which he will exalt and advance his owne name and honour, when once he seeth you fitted and duely prepared to receive it. *The Lord* (saith David, *Psal. 14. 2.*) *looked downe from heaven upon all the children of men, to see if there were any did understand and seek God.* There he is represented looking downe from heaven to see if any did understand, as here, *he looketh upon men* to see if any doe repent, saying, *I have sinned, &c.* The Lord often, yea alwayes looketh downe upon Nations, Cities and people, to see if any have a right understanding of him, or a will with upright affections to him: The Lord at this day is looing upon the sick, and looking upon the sound, to see if there are any, who are going on faithfully in a right way, or repenting that they have gone wrong. *He looketh upon men; And if any say,*

I have sinned, &c.

In this latter part of the verse, we have the matter expressed which the Lord looketh upon men for, 'tis repentance and godly sorrow for sin; *If any say, I have sinned*; That is, if any repent. When the Lord saith, *If any say, I have sinned*, he doth not meane it of a bare saying so, but, if any say so, laying his sin to heart; if any say so from a true sence of the evill of sin; if any say so burden'd with sin, and tasting the bitterness of it; if any shall say, *I have sinned*, and say it thus, then &c. The word which we translate

state *sinned*, notes a mistake of our ayme or way ; As if it had been sayd ; *If any man say*, I have gone besides the line, and done besides the rule. Sin is in all men a missing of the mark, and a stepping out of the right path ; it is also in very many, as 'tis exprest in the next clause, *a perverting of that which is right.* *If any say*, *I have sinned*,

and perverted that which is right.

Itu curvus
obliquus con-
torum perversi.
Latini dicunt
curvos mores.

The word implyeth more then ordinary sinning, more then sins of infirmity, which arise from ignorance and mistake, even those which are committed with a resolvedness of spirit, and purpose of heart ; or they imply not those sins which a man falls into unadvisedly and unawares, but those which he commits upon deliberation, and in the eye of the Law, that shewing him plainly what is right, and that he ought not to pervert it. So then in strictness of sence, *to pervert that which is right*, is to be willingly, yea wilfully unrighteous. The Church making a graduall confession of her sin by three steps, puts this word in the midst (*Psal: 106. 6.*) *We have sinned with our fathers, we have committed iniquity* ('tis this word) or done that which is *crooked and perverse*) *we have done wickedly.* *Cain*, the first man born, sinned thus (*Gen: 4. 13.*) *My punishment is greater then I can beare* (so we render) or (as we put in the margin) *mine iniquity is greater then can be forgiven.* *Cains* sin was a perverseness, he knew he perverted that which was right in slaying his brother. So that, here we have the confession of sin, with the aggravation of it, *a notorious sin.* The penitent person doth not only say, I have sinned, but I have sinned greatly, or I have *perverted that which was right.* To sin, and to pervert that which is right, are materially the same ; only the latter intimates the manner how a sin is committed, namely, when we would not be ruled by the Law, but accommodate the Law (as if it were a leaden or lesbian rule) to serve our lusts ; so perverting that which was right, that we might countenance and embolden our selves in doing wrong. If any aske

What is right ? Surely, *right* is First, The Law, Secondly, that which is done according to Law. *The statutes of God are right, rejoycing the heart* (*Psal: 19. 8.*) The word of God is right, and the rule of right, yea it is a ruling right. To pervert that which is right, or to pervert the law of righteousness, is to act against the
light

light and convictions of conscience which will be our Judge.
 One of the latine interpreters useth a harsh and course word to *Peccavi et re-*
 presse this by ; yet full and proper to the scope ; *I have tortised* *sum tortifica-*
 (or writhed and bended) *that which was right.* Another ren- *vi. Cajet:*
 ders it, *I have prevaricated from that which was right.* Our word *Prævaricatus*
 gives the sence fully enough, *I have sinned, and perverted that* *sum d probira-*
te. Tygur:
which was right.

Hence note.

First, Sin must be confessed. The Lord looks for it. He looketh
upon men to see whether any will say, I have sinned.

He will have their sin out of their own mouths. When *Nathan*
 brought the parable home to *David* and sayd, *Thou art the man,*
 he presently fell into confession, *I have sinned* (2 Sam: 12. 13.)

But some may say, Is this confession of sin sufficient to say, *I*
have sinned.

I answer ; First, a generall confession of sin, or that we have sin-
 ned is not sufficient, unlesse we are also willing and ready to con-
 fesse before the Lord all our particular sins. Some are ready
 enough to say, *they have sinned,* who yet will scarce be brought to
 acknowledge any particular sin ; yea many say, they are great sin- *Peccatores se*
 ners, who know not how or in what they have sinned, nor what it *esse pleriq;* con-
 is to sin. Therefore barely to say, *I have sinned,* is not a Gospel *sintur etiam*
 confession of sin. I answer. Secondly, Though a generall confes- *qui se vel pec-*
 sion is only expressed in this and many other Scriptures, yet a spe- *casse non cre-*
 ciall confession is intended. The prodigal Son (*Luke 15. 19.*) *dunt.* Greg: l. c:
 sayd, *I will returne to my father, and I will say to my father, I have* 24. Moral: c:
sinned against heaven, and against thee, and am no more worthy to 12.
be called thy Son. He did not enumerate the particular evill acts
 he had committed and was guilty of, yet doubtlesse he had them
 as a burden upon his heart, and was willing to unburden himselfe
 of them, one by one, in a hearty and heart-afflicting confession.
 The publican (*Luke 18. 13.*) *stood a far off, and durst not lift*
up his eyes to heaven, but only sayd, God be mercifull to me a sin-
ner. He struck at all his sins, though he did not by name touch any
 one of them. He that saith (knowing what he saith) *I have sin-*
ned, will not hide any one of his sins ; And he that indeed and
 truth confesseth any one, will cover none of his sins. Those sins
 may be pardoned which are not expressly confessed, but if we

conceale or hide any sin, and will not bring it forth in confession, we cannot, in faith, expect the pardon of it.

Againe, Consider the time or season when the Lord looked for this confession; It was a time of trouble and affliction, of paine and sorrow, the man was sick, or but in a way of recovery out of his sickness.

Hence note.

Times of affliction are speciall times of confession and repentance.

Confession of sin must not be omitted (especially not neglected) in our most comfortable dayes, much lesse in a day of trouble. A sad and troubled state calls us aloud to a gracious sadness of heart, to the search of our hearts and lives, which are preparatory to repentance and Godly sorrow. Usually in prosperity men will not be at leisure to search their hearts, and take notice of their sins. Therefore the Lord draweth them to confession by drawing them from the world, by laying them upon their sick beds, or by bringing them into straites. And as when affliction is upon persons or families, then is a speciall time to confesse personall and family sins; so to confesse national sins, is most seasonable when affliction hath seized upon kingdomes and nations. The want and neglect of that publicke confession and sorrow in such a day is mightily aggravated, and most severely threatned (*Isa: 22. 12, 13, 14.*) God looketh and loveth to heare every man, saying, and a whole nation, as one man, saying in a day of sorrow and trouble, *I have sinned, and perverted that which was right.*

From the latter words, *I have perverted that which was right, or the Law.*

Note, First.

The law of God is the rule of righteousness; a right rule.

All rightness and righteousness is comprehended in it, and measured by it.

Secondly, Learne.

Sin is a perverting of that which is right.

Every (the least) sin is so in some degree, though here, possibly, sins are intended of any, even of the highest degree. The

Apostle

Apostle defining sin, calleth it (1 John 3. 4.) *A transgression of the Law*; and if so, it must needs be a perverting of that which is right: For what is or can be right, if the rule of righteousness be not. What the Apostle spake to *Elymas* (Acts 13. 10.) *Wilt thou not cease to pervert the right wayes of the Lord*, shewes the nature and effect of every sin, and the more sinfull any sin is, by so much the more doth it pervert that which is right. Some sinners are sayd to make voyd the law of God, to pervert it, as if they would quite subvert and disanull it. *David* remembers God of such, and desires him to look to them betimes (*Psal: 119. 126.*) *It is time for thee to work, for they have made voyd thy law*; That is, they have done their best, or worst rather, their utmost to make it voyd, and of no force; 'Tis not in the power of all the powers of the world, to vacat rescind or null one tittle of the law of God, heaven and earth shall passe away before that, yet many attempt it, yea some doe that which will be found and interpreted a making voyd of the law of God, who thinke themselves great zelores for, or very zealous of the law. That will be the case of many, especially, of all will-worshippers.

Again, Consider though the person here spoken of had not only sinned, but perverted that which was right, that is, sinned perversly, yet upon confession the Lord deales graciously with him.

Hence Note.

The free grace of God extends to the pardon of the greatest sins, even sins of perversness.

Where sin aboundeth, Grace aboundeth much more (*Rom: 5. 20.*) whether the abounding of sin be taken in the number of it, or in the weight of it, that is, in the greatness and aggravations of it, Grace hath its futable super-abounding. (*Num: 23. 21.*) When *Balaam* would shew that the people of *Israel* were a people impenetrable by his curses, he saith, *The Lord hath seen no iniquity in Jacob, nor perversness in Israel.* The word there used is of a different root from this in the text, but the sence is the same, implying, if the Lord had seen *perversness* in *Israel*, it would have layd them open to a curse; yet sins made up of perversness are within the compass of a pardon. There is no sin excepted from pardon, but that which at once refuseth and despiseth it, the sin against

the holy Ghost (*Math. 12. 31.*) This should not encourage any to sin perversly, only it is a comfort to those who have. They who have sinned perversly, or who have perverseness mingled with their sin, should not cast off the hope of pardon, but woe to those who sin perversly, (that is, against the light of their owne consciences) upon hopes of pardon. Such persons have no true hope (they may have much presumption) that they shall be pardoned. They who having sinned perversly, confesse it, have good ground to pray for pardon, but they who goe on sinning perversly, have no ground (while they doe so) to hope for it. This text speakes of a person confessing and bewayling that he hath sinned perversly, not of a person purposing to sin so, as appears further in the last clause of the verse; *If any say, I have sinned and perverted that which is right.*

And it profiteth me not.

Here's another poynt of confession, we must not only confesse that we have sinned, but the fruitlesnes of sin, or that *sin profiteth not*. There are two rendrings, and so two severall explications of these words:

710
potest esse ver-
bum, potest esse
et nomen semi-
ninum. Unde
sensu est, non
accepit tantum-
dem, non repo-
sita est mihi par-
pæna pro pec-
cato meo. Coc:
Non dignè in-
me inquisivit
pro his que
peccavi, Sept:

The word signifieth most properly that which is *equall*; And hence some give the sence thus, (which carrieth in it an eminent work of repentance) *I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and have not that which is equall*; That is, *Though I am greatly afflicted, and my sorrows lye heavie upon me, yet they are not equall to my sinning, or perverse dealings with the Lord. I have not received as I was worthy, or according to my ill deservings.* The Septuagint speak thus; *God hath not made a strict inquisition for my sin.* My iniquity is not charged upon me to the utmost. I have sinned grievously, but God hath dealt graciously with me, and hath not measured out to the full of mine iniquity. 'Tis an argument of true repentance to justifie God in afflicting us. This is a pious and a profitable rendring of the text.

Whence observe.

First, *The punishment of sin in this life is not equall to sin.*

As all the sufferings of this life are not worthy to be compared with the glory of the next life (*Rom. 1. 18.*) so neither are they comparable with the sins of this life. When a man is under
 very

very fore affliction, chastened with paine upon his bed, and the multitude of his bones with strong paine : So that his life abhorreth bread, and his soul dainty meat ; yet he must confesse, his sufferings are less then his sin. The Church of the Jewes acknowledged this as to that great affliction, their captivity in Babylon (*Ezra 9. 13.*) After all that is come upon us for our evill deeds, and for our great trespasses, seeing that our God hath punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve, &c. It was no little punishment which that people endured, yet they confessed it was lesse then their iniquity. The least sin is so great, that no punishment which man is capable of in this life can equall it ; nor can that in the life to come equall it as to present degree, but only by the everlastingness of its duration.

Secondly, Note.

A soule truly humbled is ready to confesse to the glory of God; that his punishment and suffering is less then his sin.

As a godly man doth not thinke any sin little, so he doth not thinke any affliction great compared with his sin. Cain sayd, *My punishment is greater then I can beare* ; but he did not say, it was greater then his sin. How hot soever the furnace of divine wrath is heated, yet sinners must acknowledge there is sparing mercy in it ; and that God might have made it seven times hotter, and therefore hath afflicted them less then their sin. As a godly man is ready to acknowledge his mercy more then he hath deserved (*Gen. 32. 10.*) I (sayd Jacob) *am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant*, as if he had sayd ; I am less in my good actings then any of thy actings towards me for good have been) so he is ready to say, his greatest afflictions or evils which he suffereth are less then his sins, or then the evils which he hath done.

Secondly, The word signifieth to profit, so we translate ; *And Verbum Tui* it profiteth me not. Other Scriptures comply with this sense (*He- xpono, profuit* ster 3. 8.) Haman in his malicious and envious suggestion ; against the Jews, tells the King, *It is not for the Kings profit to suffer them* *non fuit mihi conducibile quod peccaram.* *to continue.* He useth the same word againe (*Hest. 5. 13.*) where after he had reported all the great things that he enjoyed, he concludes ; *What doth all this profit me ? or all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the Kings gate ?*

Thus

Thus here, saith the sick man, *I have sinned, And it profited me not, or I have got nothing by it* : And when he saith, *it profited me not* ; we are to expound it by a usuall figure in Scripture, whereby more is intended then is exprested, so that, *it profiteth me not*, is, *it had been very detrimentall, dangerous, and deadly to me*. I feel and smart under the sad issues of my sin, my perverting that which was right hath done me (though I have had but my right) much wrong. *I have sinned, and it profited me not.*

Hence note.

First, *Sin pretends profit and advantage to a sinner.*

There is no temptation comes without a bait. Though some sin purely for sins sake ; yet it is rare that sin cometh without the offer of a bribe, and profit is one of the greatest both baits and bribes that the Devill puts upon the hook of temptation, when he fisheth for soules. *You shall get by it*, saith that deceiver. But the repenting soule, can truly say, *it profited me not* ; I had thought to have gotten by my sin, it promised me very faire, but I have got nothing but blows. The temptation with which the Devill assaulted our first parents was of this kinde, He told the woman of profit, she and her husband should gaine knowledge by it, (that's a noble gaine) *They should be as Gods knowing good and evil*, there's all profit imaginable in such a knowledge. Christ himselfe who was God and perfectly knew good and evil, was also tempted with profit (*Math: 4. 8, 9.*) *The devill shewed him all the kingdoms of the world* (and those not with bare walls, but ready hung and furnished) *and the glory of them, and sayd unto him, all these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall downe and worship me*. If our head and the heire of all things was tempted with profit, how much more poor we ! No marvaile if Satan provide him Agents to say to us as they are represented (*Pro: 1. 13.*) *Come, cast in your lot among us, we will all have one purse, or a joynt stock in this wicked trade* ; What they hoped to get by it, is told us in the next words ; *We shall find all precious substance, and fill our houses with spoyle*. We shall get enough, and you shall share with us if you will but come and goe with us. We see what sin promiseth ; But what doth the sinner find ? himselfe answers, *It profited me not.*

Hence

Hence learne.

There is nothing gotten by sin, no good is gotten by it.

The Apostle puts the question to sinners (*Rom: 6. 21.*) *What fruit had ye then, in these things whereof ye are now ashamed?* Cast up your account, and tell us what you find at the foot of it. Possibly some may say, we have gotten hundreds and thousands, we have gotten houses and lands, our barnes are full of corne, our fields of cattel, and our bags are full of treasure. But is it profit to have house and land, gold and silver come in by sin? Let that Scripture answer (*Math: 16. 26.*) *What is a man profited if he shall gaine the whole world and loose his own soule?* But some may say, they that are in Christ cannot loose their soules by sin. I answer; First, though they that are in Christ cannot be such sinfull soules, as to sin away their soules, though they cannot sin at such a rate, nor in such a height as to loose their soules who have indeed found Christ, or rather who are found of him, and planted in him; yet the dammage which every sin unrepented of and unpardoned puts man to is the losse of his soule. Secondly, suppose a sinner repenteth, what hath he got by sin, but the sorrows of repentance. And though no man shall have cause to repent of true repentance for sin, yet no man shall have cause to boast of the penny-worth he hath had by sin which hath occasion'd the sorrows of that repentance. One houres communion with God in wayes of holiness is better then all the profits and pleasures which any man hath got while he was committing that sin, or running any course of sin, whereof he now repenteth. At the best sin dishonours God, troubles our consciences, and breakes our peace; at the best nothing is got by sin which is worth the having, at worst the soule is lost by it, which of all things we have is most worth the having.

Thirdly, Note.

Sin is exceeding dangerous and destructive to man.

Some would sin for the pleasures and carnal contentments which are found in sin, though they knew they should make no earnings, or get no profit by it, yea though they knew they should be and dye beggars by it. Once more, if this were all, that they should loose heaven by it, or if the meaning of loosing their soules were

were only this, that their soules should be no more, they would easily venture it. But there is an affirmative in the negative, and when, 'tis sayd, *sin profiteth not*, the meaning is, it brings trouble and renders us miserable for ever; *Fooles* (that is, all sinfull men, saith the Spirit of God, *Psal: 107. 17.*) *because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities are afflicted*; and all such among these fooles, as dye in their sin are damned; and who is able to summe up the dammage of damnation?

Fourthly, *Learne.*

Sinners shall be forced at last to confesse that there is no profit in sin.

True penitents confesse it willingly now; and impenitents shall confesse it at last, whether they will or no; they shall have such a conviction of the evill of sin by their sufferings, as will make them say, what hath pride profited me? and what hath envy profited me? what hath malice and wrath profited me? And what hath the fraudulent deceiving of my neighbour profited me? this will be the cry of sinners to all eternity. Oh what hath sin profited us? That which is the willing confession of a gracious repentant here, will be the forced confession of damned impenitents for ever hereafter. This will be a bitter repentance. Hell is and will be full of the words of repentance, but no fruit of repentance shall be found there. The damned shall not find either amendment in themselves, or mercy from God. This will be the confession of all sinners at last (as of those that repent and are saved, so of those who repent when damned) we have sinned and perverted that which was right, and it hath not profited us. And when once man hath made this hearty confession to God of his sin and folly, then God maketh him a gracious promise of deliverance and mercy, as appeares in the tenour of the next verse.

Vers. 28. *He will deliver his soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light.*

There is a two-fold reading of this 28th verse, as was shewed in opening the former. For whereas that 27th verse is understood by some as the humble confession of the sick man recovered, and so read in this forme; *He looketh upon men and saith, I have sinned*
and

and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not ; then, this 28th verse is rendred to make up that sence, as a thankfull acknowledgement of his recovery, *He hath delivered my soule from going into the pit, and my life seeth the light.* Thus, as we had his confession of repentance in the verse fore-going, *I have sinned, &c.* *Iuxta hanc lo-*
 so here we have his confession of praise and thankfulness ; *He hath lionem erit o-*
delivered my soule from going into the pit. Mr Broughton translates *tiannū hic ver-*
 to this sence ; *He saved my soule from going into the pit, that my sus ex confessione*
life doth see the light. Thus the sick man being restored breakes *restituti agri*
 out into thanksgiving ; *The Lord in mercy hath freed me from death, dei in se sum-*
hell, and the grave ; I need not feare Satans accusations ; my body en- *man beneficen-*
joyes the light of the world, and my soule the light of Gods counte- *tiam agnosce-*
nance shining upon me, which is better then life. But because our *tin. Merc:*
 owne reading is cleare in the originall text, and holds out the scope of the context fully enough, therefore I shall prosecute that only.

He will deliver his soule from going into the pit.

The words are an assertion of the favour and goodnesse of God to the penitent sick man ; *He* (that is, God) *looketh upon men,* and if he heare any saying, *I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not*, if he make such an humble and gracious confession, this will be the issue ; the Lord will deliver his soule from going into the pit. At the 18th verse, we had words of the same import ; *He keepeth back his soule from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.* And againe, at the 24th verse, *Deliver him from going downe to the pit.* To be delivered from the pit (as was there shewed) is to be delivered from death. And the word *soule* (as was then likewise expounded) is put for the person ; As if it were sayd ; He will deliver him, the penitent man from death ; and that both from temporall death, the death of the body, and from eternall death, the destruction of body and soule ; or he will deliver him first from the pit of the grave ; and secondly, from the pit of hell. *He will deliver his soule from the pit.*

And his life shall see the light.

That is, he shall live to see the light ; *To see the light*, is a circumlocution of life ; As if it had been sayd, He shall recover out of his deadly sickness, and behold the light of the Sun, as living

Videre lucem
periphrasis est
vitæ ; sicut a
contrario tene-
bræ sunt symbo-
lum mortis.

men doe. Thus David prayed (*Psal: 56. 13.*) *That he might walke before God in the light of the living.* And thus the wicked man is threatned with eternall death (*Psal: 49. 19.*) *He shall goe to the generation of his fathers, they shall never see light ;* That is, they shall never enjoy life, but be shut up in a perpetuall night of death, or in the night of perpetuall death.

Secondly, When 'tis sayd, *his life shall see the light*, we may understand it, not only for a bare returne to life, or that he shall live, but that he shall live comfortably and prosperously, he shall lead a happy life. *To see the light*, is to live and rejoyce ; light is pleasant, it is comfortable to behold the Sun, as *Solomon* speakes. To see light, comprehends all the comforts of this life, and of that to come, which is called, *the inheritance of the Saints in light*, (*Col: 1. 12.*) For as darkness is put not only for death, but for all the troubles of this life, and the torments of the next ; so light is put both for life, and for all the comforts of this and the next life. All the blessings of this temporall life, and the perfect blessedness of eternall life, are comprehended in light. So that when 'tis sayd, *his life shall see the light*, the sence riseth thus high ; *He shall be happy forever ;* so extensive is the favour of God to repenting persons, that time is too narrow for it ; everlasting light shall be their portion. From the former branch of the words thus opened, *He will deliver him from the pit.*

Observe.

All our deliverances are of God.

As there is none can deliver like God, so none can deliver but God. If he gives out the word that such a man shall goe to the pit, it is not in the power and skill of all the Princes and Physicians in the world, to save or stay him from it. And how low and desperate soever any mans condition is, if God say the word, he is deliver'd and reprieved from going downe into the pit.

Secondly, From the connexion with the former verse, the sick man having made this confession, *I have sinned and perverted that which is right, and it profiteth me not*, the Lord presently delivers him, &c.

Observe.

God is ready to deliver, humble praying and believing sinners.

That

That command hath a promise joyned to it (*Psal. 50. 15.*) *Call upon me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver.* The 107th Psalme speakes this quite through, where we find many sorts of perishing persons, crying unto God, and God delivering them from perishing when they cryed. As when sin cryeth God will afflict, so when sinners cry, God will relieve them in or bring them out of their affliction.

From the latter branch, *His life shall see the light.*

Note.

Naturall life, and light are a great blessing.

God promiseth much when he promiseth life and light; The light of this life is no small mercy, how much greater is the light of spirituall life? But who can conceive how great a mercy the light of eternall life is! yet all this God speakes to the humble and believing sinner, when he saith, *His life shall see the light.*

Secondly, Comparing the two parts of this text together, *He will deliver him from going downe to the pit, and his life shall see the light.*

Observe.

The mercy of God to humble sinners, is a compleate mercy.

Here is not only deliverance from evill, but the bestowing of good; it is much to be kept from going downe into the pit, but it is more to see light, the light of comfort here, and the light of glory hereafter. The mercy of God to his people is great in temporalls, greater in spiritualls; greatest in eternalls. The benefit of redemption (to shew the fullness of it) is set forth two wayes; First, by our freedome from evill; Secondly, by our enjoyment of good. (*John 3. 16.*) *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life. He shall not perish* (that is, he shall be delivered from going downe to the pit) *he shall have everlasting life; that is* (as the text speakes) *his life shall see the light.*

Elihu having at large drawne a description or narration of the whole proceeding of God with sinfull man in all the parts and particulars of it, gives a brieve of all that he sayd, in the two next verses.

Verf. 29. *Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with man ;*

Verf. 30. *To bring back his soule from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.*

As the Apostle after he had discoursed at large, about the dignity of Christs Priest-hood, gathers up all together (*Heb. 8. 1.*) *Now of the things which we have spoken, this is the sum: we have such an high Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens: So Elihu having spoken much of the severall wayes, by which God revealeth himselfe to man, and works him to a sight of his sin, and penitentiall sorrow for it, recollects and summes up all in these words.*

Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes with man, &c.

In these two verses, we may take notice, chiefly of two things.

First, The frequency of Gods dealing thus with man (*v. 29th*) *Lo all these things worketh God oftentimes.*

Secondly, The designe and purpose of God in doing so; *That he may bring back his soule from the pit, and be enlightened with the light of the living.*

Lo, all this worketh God oftentimes with man.

Here's the application of the former Doctrine; *Elihu* presseth his hearers with it, and bids them lay it to heart; As if he had sayd, *I have not been speaking of things in the clouds, but of what is really and dayly acted among the children of men. Lo (or behold) all these things.* There are foure speciall significations in Scripture of this word, *Lo*, or *behold*, and they may all foure meete in this place.

First, It imports some new unheard-of and wonderfull thing (*Isa. 7. 14.*) *Lo, or behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son:* That a virgin should bring forth a son, is a wonder of wonders, a wonder so much above the course and power of Nature, so much beyond the compasse & comprehension of reason, that men and Angels have reason to be astonished at it.

Secondly, 'Tis prefixed, to shew some extraordinary impulse or readinesse of spirit for action. Thus Christ speaketh in that
other

other noble prophecy of him (*Pſal: 40. 7.*) *Then ſaid I, Lo, I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to doe thy will O my God: yea thy Law is within my heart. Lo, I come,* that is, I am ready to come, I am preſt upon the work, I am under the preſſure and command of my own ſpirit, as well as under thy appoyment and decree to undertake and finiſh that worke of mans redemption.

Thirdly, It frequently implyeth matter worthy of weight and deepeſt conſideration. That's uſefull and remarkeable which is thus prefaced. Thus *Solomon* ſpeaking of the field of the ſlothfull man, ſaith (*Prov: 24. 31.*) *Lo, it was all growne over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the ſtone wall thereof was broken downe:* As if he had ſayd, Marke, this is a thing to be attended, the ſluggards field is full of thorns; that is, in a ſpirituell ſence, *ſlothfull hearts are full of luſts and vanities.* In this language the Church invites all to conſider the Glorious excellencies of God (*Iſa: 29. 9.*) *Lo, this is our God.* And thus Chriſt ſpeakes of the woman whom he had healed on the Sabbath day (*Luke 13. 16.*) *And ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, theſe eightene years, be looſed from her infirmity on the Sabbath day?* As if he had ſayd, Pray conſider the caſe and ſpeake your mindes.

Fourthly, 'Tis often uſed in a way of ſtrong aſſertion, and affirmation, intimating the certainty of what is ſpoken (*Gen: 1. 29.*) *And God ſaid, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing ſeed.* And againe (*Gen: 12. 11.*) *It came to paſſe, when he was come neere to enter into Egypt, that he ſaid unto Sarah his wife, Behold, now, I know that thou art a faire woman to look upon.* (Read *Pſal. 132. 6. Ezek: 30. 9. Luke 1. 32.*)

In the preſent text it may have all theſe intendments; for is it not a wonderfull thing, that God ſhould be gracious to poore creatures? is it not ſtrange that he ſhould take ſo much paines with, and exerciſe ſo much patience towards them? Secondly, *Lo, God worketh all theſe things;* He is ready to doe them, he waiteth to be gracious, or to magnifie his grace in doing them. Thirdly, *Lo, God worketh all theſe things;* is not this a matter of great conſideration, ought we not to ſit downe and weigh it well? Fourthly, *Lo, all theſe things worketh God;* certainly God hath and will work all theſe things; this is a truth out of all queſtion, a truth of which

which there is no doubt to be made. As the Apostle saith (1 Tim. 3. 16.) *Without controversie, great is the mystery of Godliness, God was manifest in the flesh*; So I may say without controversie, great is this mystery of Gods manifesting himselfe to frayle flesh, and doing all these things here spoken of, awaking the consciences of men by dreames, and working upon them by grievous sicknesses, sending an interpreter one of a thousand to declare unto man his uprightness, and at last delivering his soule from going downe into the pit. *Lo, all these things worketh God.*

hunc operatus est egir, perficit, usurpatur etiam pro gubernatione rerum creaturarum.

There is somewhat peculiar in that expression, *he worketh*. The native sence of the word, implyeth; First, a willing worke, not forced or constrained. Secondly, a full and compleat worke, not an essay or offer, not a worke begun only, but carried on to perfection. The wicked are called *workers of iniquity*, (Psal: 5. 5.) because they are free and ready to sin, they have a strong tyde and bent of spirit to doe evill, and they doe it not to halves but throughly; they doe not only begin or nibble at the baite a little (as a good man often doth) but greedily swallow it downe hooke and all; they are fully in it, and doe it fully, they make a worke of it, and so are *workers of iniquity*. The Lord doth good, as the wicked doe evill; *All these things worketh God*, He worketh them willingly, he worketh them compleatly, (Isa: 26. 12.) *Lord thou wilt ordaine peace for us, for thou also hast wrought all our workes in us*; Thou art the Author and finisher of them. We are invited (Psal: 46. 8.) *to come and behold the workes of the Lord, what desolations he hath made in the earth*. The building workes, and the desolating workes of God, whether respecting persons or nations, are perfect workes. *Lo, all these things worketh God.*

Hence note.

What ever good we see wrought among or for the children of men, God is the worker of it.

As he over-ruleth the evill which is done, and both sendeth and ordereth the evill which is suffered; so he is the worker of all the good that is done. God worketh it all either immediately by himselfe, or mediately by second causes; and what instrument soever is set a worke, yet the worke as to the matter and manner of it, as also to the result and issue of it, is the Lords. He was the
worker

worker of all that hath been spoken of in the former context ; though we reade of a messenger, of an interpreter, yet the work was Gods. 'Tis sayd (*Gen: 39. 22.*) *The keeper of the prison committed to Josephs hand, all the prisoners that were in the prison, and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it.* Not that he did every thing with his own hand in the prison, but he gave the rule, and ordered all that was done. Much more may I say of the Lord; whatsoever is done in the world, especially among his people, *God is the doer of it, All goes through his hand. Lo, all these things worketh God.*

Further, From the prefix, *Lo.*

Observe.

The workes and dealings of God with men are wonderfull; those especially which he worketh for the humbling of a sinner, and for the delivering of a soule from going downe to the pit.

The breaking of the heart, the raising of it by faith, the renewing of its peace and comfort, are wonderfull workes of God. And the reason why we wonder no more at them, is, because we consider so little of them.

Hence againe from the word, *Lo.*

Note.

The workes of God are to be deeply considered, to be stayed upon.

We must not passe them by lightly, whether they be towards our selves or others, *God hath made his wonderfull workes to be remembred* (*saith David, Psal: 111. 4.*) or *to be considered*, that's the designe of God in his works, he hath made them for that end, that they should be remembred, and attended to, or they are such as cannot but be remembred; they leave their markes and memorials behind them. God sets such a stamp of his power, wisdom, justice, and goodness upon his workes, that they will not be forgotten. And as his outward providential workes, are such, so his spirituall workes are much more such. The godly-wise understand them so, they have a criticall eye in discerning those invisible workes of God with a poore soule, in reducing him from sin, and bringing him to himselfe. *David calleth all the godly to the consideration of those workes in his owne case (Psal: 66. 26.) Come and heare all ye that feare God, and I will declare what*

he hath done for my soule. What God doth for our bodies is very
considerable, but what he hath done for our soules can never be
enough considered nor admired. *Lo, all these things worketh God
oftentimes with man.*

פעמ'ם
שלש

ὁ δὲ ταῦτα πα-
 ρα ἔργαται ὁ
 ἰσχυρὸς ὁ δὲ
 ἰσχυρὸς μετὰ α-
 νδρῶν. Sept:
 ὁ δὲ ταῦτα τῶ-
 ντων ἰσχυρῶν.
 Schol.

The original is, *twice, thrice*, so we put in the margin, and render it *often-times*, in the text. Some expound it, of those three distinct wayes, in which God dealeth with man, before described. The Septuagint are expresse for that; *All these things worketh the strong God three wayes with man*, Which the Scholiast exemplifies in the three wayes here noted by *Elihu*. First, awaking him by dreames and visions, Secondly, troubling him by sicknesses and afflictions; Thirdly, teaching him by Prophets and Interpreters. Yet, I conceive, the text doth not strictly recapitulate those three severall wayes before spoken of, in these words, *twice, thrice*, but only shewes us that God useth all these wayes or any other, as his wisdom shall thinke fit, many times, or oftentimes for the producing of those blessed effects.

Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man.

Twice, thrice, is a double certain number, put for any single uncertain number; And it only teacheth or assureth us, that God debateth with the sons of men in all or any of these wayes oftentimes, or more then once. If they doe not answer his call or purpose (which they seldome doe) at the first; he calleth againe and againe, *twice* or *thrice*, or often-times, that is as often as he seeth it good, needfull or expedient to doe it. And we may suppose that *Elihu* useth this number *twice*, or *thrice*, in allusion to the customes of men; whether civil Magistrates or Churches, who when they deale with others about any fault committed or offence given, they doe not take them at the very first default, but warne and admonish them twice or thrice, or send them (as the case may require) severall Citations to appeare, and either to acknowledge their guilt, or acquit themselves of it.

These things worketh God twice or thrice.

Tribus vicibus,
i.e. multoties,
sed utitur nu-
mero ternario,

And remember, it is but *twice* or *thrice*; which speech though it may be well rendred (as we say) *oftentimes*, yet it is not *very often*; *once* is no number, *twice* is the least number, and *thrice* is but a small

small number, two or three witnesses are the least number of witnesses that can be admitted in any business. That, the Lord will doe this, *twice or thrice* proves that he will doe it severall times, men shall have meanes, and frequent meanes, but *twice or thrice* may not be *very often*, much lesse *alwayes*, there is a stint, and a determinate number in the breast of God; and that we might not expect to have his patience lengthned out alwayes to us, 'tis put into the smallest numbers, *All these things worketh God twice or thrice,*

ut congruat humanæ consuetudini, per quam solent homines ter moneri vel citari. Aquin:

with man.

The word by which man is here expressed, is, no ordinary word, 'tis that word by which signifieth the highest and greatest of men, God deales thus not only with inferiour persons, and mean men, but with great men, with men of note, with men of power and strength; let men be as strong, and stout, as they will, God can tame them, and bring them to his foote.

בר non quæ liber virū importat, sed ut plurimum nobilem illustrem, vel aliqua ratione spectabilem. Bold:

Further, when he saith, *Lo, all these things God worketh oftentimes with man.* This appellative *man*, may be taken two wayes.

First, Personally or individually, that is, he worketh thus oftentimes with the same man, God is put to renew his doings more then once with one and the same man, because he will not bow nor obey at first.

Secondly, We may take this word *man* specially as implying severall men, or men of all sorts, as well as any one man of a sort. That manner of speaking is frequent in the old Testament (*Job 1. 4.*) *And his sons went and feasted in their houses, man his day,* or every one his day. So (*Jon. 1. 7.*) *And they sayd, every one to his fellow, or man to his fellow,* so here God worketh these things oftentimes with man, that is, with severall men, as seemeth good to him. The speech is distributive. For though we are not to understand it so largely, as if God dealt thus with every particular man, yet he deales thus with many men, even with as many as himselfe pleaseth, or hath purposed. *Lo, All these things worketh God oftentimes with man.*

q. d. unicuique hominum solet deus prædicta suæ voluntatis iudicia manifestare, ut sit oratio distributiva. Bold:

Hence note.

Such is the goodness of God, that though man is not wrought upon presently, or at the first, yet he will come a second or a third

time

time to carry his worke through with him.

'Tis a mercy that God will speake once, or use any means once with us, 'tis mercy that he will speake any one word in any one way, to bring us off from sin; 'tis mercy that he will send one vision, or one affliction, to awaken us out of our security, or one messenger to instruct us once in our duty; but when the Lord is pleased to use severall meanes, and those severall meanes, severall times, how doth the abundant mercy and graciousness of God appeare in this! And as the mercy of God in generall, so the patience of God in speciall appeareth abundantly in it. The Lord waites to be gracious, he waites the working of this or that means, of a second and third meanes, and he waites the working of them all over againe and againe, or oftentimes; here is patience with long-sufferance.

Secondly, Observe.

God will perfect his worke, and bring it to an issue with sinful man.

God would not give over working to humble Job, till he had fully humbled him; And this made Job almost amazed at Gods dealing with him (*Chap: 7. 17, 18, 19.*) *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him? and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? And that thou shouldest visit him every morning, and try him every moment:* Job seemed much troubled at this instancy of God with him, and therefore expostulated in the next words, *How long wilt thou not depart from me, nor let me alone till I swallow downe my spittle?* But, for all his crying, God would not depart from him, nor let him alone for a morning, no nor for a moment till he had finished his worke and accomplished his will both in him and upon him; till he had brought his heart into a due frame and temper under his mighty hand. If once or twice will not doe it, he will doe it thrice; The Lord is not weary either of working or waiting; *God is a rocke* (saith Moses Deut: 32.4.) *and his worke is perfect;* and of all his workes, that of grace is most perfect. His visible providentiall workes are perfect or shall be before he hath done with them, or put his last hand to them, but his invisible spirituall workes are most perfect; as God worketh often to bring man out of the state of sin to grace; so he will not cease working till grace be perfected, he will worke till that worke is wrought
to

to the height, till the top-stone of it is set up, or as the Apostle phraseth it (*Eph. 4. 13.*) *Till we all come to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.* Though a man hath been once truly humbled, yet God humbles him againe, that he may be humbled gradually as well as truly to his own mind. They that are humbled by affliction, may need more afflictions to humble them. The same meanes by which faith and repentance are wrought at first, doe also encrease and strengthen faith and repentance. Those meanes by which a man is at first purged, are very proper for his further purging (*John 15. 2.*) *Every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.* As no man can be a true branch (hypocrites and formalists are branches only in appearance and profession, they were never truly purged, now, I say, as no man can be a true branch) till he is purged, so God purgeth those who are true fruit-bearing branches more and more, that they may bring forth more fruit. And the means by which he purgeth them, that is, mortifieth their corruptions, seldome reach this blessed effect at once or twice working, and therefore the Lord is even constrained to worke these things twice, thrice, or oftentimes, else the worke would not be brought to the intended issue.

Thirdly, In that it is sayd, *All these things worketh God oftentimes, not alwayes.*

Observe.

Man should make hast to answer the call of God, and come up to what he requirerh of him.

For though God worke these things oftentimes, yet no man knowes how often he will worke, and we may all know, he will not worke alwayes. 'Tis a high and dangerous presumption to deferre at any time upon hopes that God will work at another time, because in some cases he workes oftentimes. Remember (as was shewed before in opening the words) this thrice is the least number of often, as twice is the least number of any; two or three are the least number that makes a Church-assembly (*Math. 18. 20.*) The Prophet saith (*Amos 2. 4.*) *For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turne away the punishment thereof.* Implying that if men multiply their transgressions, God will not alwayes

Rabbi Solom:

*colligit terram
tum homini ig-
nosceret deum;
at quarto si ad
peccandum re-
dierit esse quod
sibi à gehenna
timeat; et id
esse putat quod
hoc loco ab Eli-
hu dicitur.*

alwayes give them meanes of repentance, but powre out wrath upon them; So *Elihu* saith, God worketh *twice and thrice*; but if men will sin three or foure times, where is their warrant that God will pardon or passe by their sins? The Prophet did not binde up the mercy of God precisely to two or three transgressions, but if men sin without bounds, he shewes they have no ground to expect God should be mercifull. One of the Jewish Rabbins (as some expound him) concludes peremptorily, If man sin twice or thrice God will spare, but if foure times God will punish. We doe not circumscribe the grace of God to a speciall number, and possibly that Rabbin did not intend it so, but only that all should take heed they doe not abuse the grace of God. That God multiplyeth to pardon, or (as we render, *Isa. 55. 7.*) *Pardoneth abundantly*, is no security for any man to sin abundantly, or to multiply transgressions. *My spirit shall not alwayes strive with man* (saith the Lord, *Gen. 6. 3.*) I have striven long already, and I will yet strive longer, even an hundred and twenty yeares, but I will not strive alwayes. God gave *Jezebel* a space to repent (*Rev. 2. 21.*) but when she repented not, he did not promise her a new space to repent in, but threatned her with wrath to the utmost if she repented not. There is a frequency in the worke of God to reduce sinners, but not a perpetuity. And as in this verse *Elihu* reports this frequency of his worke, so in the next he reports that to be the designe of it,

Verf. 30. *To bring back his soule from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.*

This verse (I say) sheweth the purpose of God in working *twice, thrice, or oftentimes with man*. This purpose (as was touched before) is two-fold. First, to free and deliver him from evill, the worst of evils, a horrible *pit*. Secondly, to estate him in and give him possession of not only that which is good, but best of all, *the light of the living*. Nor is this purpose of God a bare desire (that's often fruitless and successeless) but a strong or settled resolution, *to bring back the sick mans soule from the pit*. And *Elihu* (we may suppose) spake thus, as to presse *Job* to hasten the worke of his repentance; so to put him in hope (upon consideration of this designe of God in afflicting him) that he should be

be delivered from his afflictions, and have not only his life continued, but the comforts of it restored to him. As if he had sayd, *Be not afraid; doe not look upon thy condition as hopelesse, or that the humiliation of thy selfe will be fruitlesse, for I dare assure thee, God hath gracious purposes and intendments towards thee in working these things.*

And here we have a two-fold gracious purpose of God expressed; First, to deliver him from evill; *to bring back his soule from the pit.* Secondly, to doe him good, or to bestow positive blessings upon him (as was shewed at the 28th verse) even *to be enlightened with the light of the living*; As if he had sayd, *God in all this aymes only at mans good, that his sin unrepented of be not his death and destruction, and that under a sence of Divine favour towards him, he may lead a comfortable life here, and be happy forever.*

To bring back his soule from the pit.

It is sayd at the 28th verse, *He will deliver his soule from going into the pit*; in both places the pit is the same.

But seeing the Lord there promised to deliver his soule from going into the pit, how is he sayd here, *to bring back his soule from the pit*? A man being delivered from going to the pit, cannot be sayd to be brought back from the pit.

I answer in two things; the words rendred *to bring back his soule from the pit*, may be read thus; *to turne away his soule from the pit*; that is, to preserve him from death. So the Hebrew word is used (Chap: 15. 13.) as also (Mal: 2. 6.) *He walked with me in peace and equity, and did turne away many from iniquity.* If we take that rendring of the word, then the expressions in both places beare the same sence. But taking it according to our reading, in which *to bring back his soule from the pit*, sounds, as if the man had been in the pit already; and it may well be sayd so, because a man in great affliction, whether of soule or body, is, as it were, dead, or buried alive. For as when God converts a sinner, he (upon the matter) brings him back from hell; so when he delivers him from any grievous sickness, he doth (upon the matter) bring him back from the grave. Heman in spirituall afflictions and soule-desertions, the terrours of the Lord being upon him, called himselfe free among the dead, like the slaine that lye in the grave, whom

whom God remembereth no more, and they are cut off from thy hand, (Psal: 88. 5.) They that are neere the pit of death, are not, much, improperly, called dead, and they that being in such a desperate case are kept from going downe to the pit, are not, much, improperly sayd to be-brought back from the pit, or pulled out of it. In which sence we may keep to our owne reading; and so to bring back his soule from the pit., notes only the extreame danger wherein he was, whether spirituall or temporall, and Gods graciousnes in delivering him from it.

Hence note.

When God restores a man out of any desperate condition, whether of soule or body, he gives him a new life; he brings him in one respect back from the grave, and in another from hell.

As a sick man, he is brought from the grave, and as a sinner he is brought from hell. Great deliverances are a kind of new creation; And fresh blessings are to us as fresh beings. Take these two inferences from it.

First, How should they, who have been under great outward afflictions, praise the Lord when they are delivered! They who having had the sentence of death in themselves, should look upon themselves when restored, as men raised from the dead. And how should sinners praise the Lord, when he hath reconciled them to himselfe, and pardoned their sins. In doing this for them, he delivereth them from wrath, from hell, and from eternall death. Let such praise the name of the Lord, and say, as in the text, *He hath delivered our soules from the pit.*

Secondly, Let such live unto God, having received a new life from God; They that have received a new temporall life from God, ought to dedicate it unto God; how much more they that have received new spirituall life? They that have received it indeed, cannot but dedicate it unto God. This negative mercy calls aloud for all that we are or have to be given up to God, but that positive mercy which followeth, calleth yet lowder for it.

And to be enlightned with the light of the living.

Nomen ירו
non sumitur pro
quibuslibet ho-
minibus ac vi-
ta fruuentibus,

Take it for temporall, spirituall, or eternall life, all these ends are accomplished in those mercifull workes of God to poore sinners; some reſtraine the text to the light of this temporall life, others

others enlarge it to the light of spirituall and eternall life. We are *enlightned with the light of the living*, When the comforts of this life are restored, much more are they, who are restored to the comforts of their spirituall life, and so to the hope of eternall life.

By *the living*, we are not to understand those who are barely on this side the grave, and yet breath in the ayre; or who have only a weake shadowed spirituall life, which they scarce know of or perceive. The *living* here are they that live comfortably and prosperously both as to soule and body. Thus 'tis sayd in that Prophecy of Christ (*Psal: 72. 13.*) *He shall live, and to him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him continually, and dayly shall he be praised.* Christ lives to purpose, he lives as a Prince, in power and dignity, yea he is the Prince of life. It was more then a sensitive or rationall life which Davids faith was assured of, when he sayd (*Psal: 118. 17.*) *I shall not dye but live*; his meaning was, I shall live honourably and triumphantly, declaring (with joy) the workes of the Lord. Thus here, *To be enlightned with the light of the living*, is, to enjoy a comfortable life, or to live happily.

Hence note.

A troubled state is a dark state, sickness and sorrow, whether inward or outward, are darkness.

They are darkned with the darkness of the dead, whose life is wrapped up in anguish and sorrow.

Secondly, Note.

The designe and purpose of God in all his ordinances, and providences towards his people is for their good.

All that hath been sayd before, emptieth it selfe into these sayings, *To keep back his soule from the pit, and to be enlightned with the light of the living.* The Lord hath no eye in these workes to his owne gaine, but mans good, *The Lord doth not willingly grieve, nor afflict the children of men* (*Lam: 3. 35.*) He taketh no pleasure in it abstractly considered, nor doth he look for any profit by it: Much lesse doth he it (as it follows, *v. 36.*) *meerely to crush under his feete all the prisoners of the earth.* All that he expects by it as to himselfe is to be glorified by all (for himselfe is above all,

all, and therefore designeth himselfe in all) yet the glory which God hath by man is only the manifestation of his glory, not any addition to it. The benefit which God aymes at in afflicting man returnes to man. He would have man bettered by affliction, and as soone as man is bettered by affliction, every thing shall goe better with him, and he shall be delivered from affliction. (*Rom: 8. 28.*) *All things worke together for the good of them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.* And as all things worke together for the good of them, who are the called according to his purpose, so it is the purpose of God that all things should worke together for their good, and that is not a successles purpose. Indeed every rod upon the backs of the wicked hath a voyce in it, to call them from the pit of death and destruction, and to be enlightned with the light of the living; but God makes this call effectuall to all his elect, none of whom shall perish with the world. So that a godly man should be so farre from judging himselfe dealt with as an enemy (as *Job* in his extremity did) when he is most sorely afflicted, that indeed he may see the love and fatherly care of God in it. All the providentiall dispensations of God worke to glorious ends. Sometimes for the outward good of his people in this life, alwayes for good as to their spirituall and eternall life.

Therefore, lay aside hard thoughts of God whatsoever hard things he is a doing, or you are suffering. The wayes in which God leads us, may possibly be very darke, yet they run to this poynt, to keep us from the pit of darkness, and that we may be enlightned with the light of the living.

Thirdly, Note.

Man would undoe himselfe both for here and for ever, if God did not worke wonderfully for him, and powerfully keep him from destruction.

All these things God worketh twice and thrice, to keep our soules from the pit; man left to himselfe would run head-long upon mischief in this world, & upon eternall misery in the world to come. Nothing but the hand of God can hold man from ruining himselfe. The heart of man is so set upon sin, that he will rather loose his soule, then leave his lust; and will rather dye then that shall. 'Tis as easie to stay the motion of the Sun, or to turne
back

back the course of nature, as to stay or turne back the naturall motion or course of the heart in sinning. An almighty power must doe the latter as well as the former. So that if the Lord did not put forth more then mercy, even mercy clothed with power, no man could be saved; should God wish us never so well, and tell us what good he hath layd up for us, if we will but believe and obey him; should he tell us he hath riches of mercy, and that every one who will come shall have his share, yet we should never have any, if left to our owne chusing. 'Tis a worke therefore both of mercy and power which keepes us from the pit. God had much adoe to keepe Lot from being consumed in Sodom. He had warning to be gone, yet he was loth to goe; The text saith (Gen. 19. 16.) *While Lot lingred the men layd hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters, the Lord being mercifull to him, and they brought him forth, and set him without the City; else probably he had lingred, till he had perished.* Surely if God did not thrust sinners out of the Sodom of this world (as we say) by head and shoulders, they would perish in it and with it. How wonderfull is the goodnesse of God who doth all these things, not only to keep poore creatures from going downe to the pit, both temporally, and eternally, but also that they *may be enlightned with the light of the living.*

JOB. Chap. 33. Vers. 31, 32, 33.

*Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, hold thy peace,
and I will speak.
If thou hast any thing to say, answer me: speak, for
I desire to justify thee.
If not, hearken unto me; hold thy peace, and I shall
teach thee wisdom.*

THese three verses containe the Epilogue or conclusion of *Elihu's* first addresse to *Job*. In which we may consider these three things.

First, He perswadeth him to a due attention and silent consideration, both of what he had sayd, or should say further. (v. 31.) *Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me, &c.*

Secondly, He gives him liberty, and faire leave to reply, if he should please to what he hath already spoken (v. 32.) *If thou hast any thing to say answer me, speake.* To which concession or invitation he adds a very friendly and an ingenuous reason in the close of the verse; *For I desire to justify thee.*

Thirdly, He professeth his owne readines to proceed and speak further with him, or to carry on this discourse, in case *Job* had nothing to reply. (v. 33d) *If not, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.*

Vers. 31. *Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me.*

In this verse *Elihu* calls for a two-fold attention; First, to those things he had already spoken. Secondly, to those things which he was yet to speake. What he had already spoken, he desireth him to consider and make reply if he pleased, as is cleare (v. 32.) and as to what he had yet further to say, he desireth his attention and submission, as it followeth (v. 33.) *If not hearken unto me, hold thy peace.*

Mark well, O Job, hearken unto me.

*¶ Magnam
mentis attentio-
nem denotat,*

Here are two words of attention, *marke*, and *hearken*, and both very significant ones. The word rendred *mark*, signifieth to attend,

to marke and hearken to what is spoken to us, all the powers of our inward man, the understanding, will and affections are at worke in hearing.

Hencen etc.

He that will profit by hearing must be an attentive hearer.

He must mark and hearken, a fruitfull hearer doth more then heare, he markes ; not only is his eare at worke, but his minde, his hearr, his whole soule is, as it were, transformed into an eare, or is active at his eare. There are many, and it were well there were more *hearers* of the word, but there are few *markers* of the word, many come to Sermons, yet but few hearken unto Sermons ; every hearer is not a *marker*, not a *hearkner* to what he heareth, and not being so, he can scarcely be called a hearer ; for they only that are *markers* shall attaine that mark of which the Apostle speaks (*Phil. 3. 14.*) *I presse toward the mark for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* What is our mark in hearing ? is it not salvation by Christ, and glory with him ? Now unlesse we are *markers*, we never presse towards, much lesse attaine that mark, *the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Mark well, O *Job, hearken unto me,*

hold thy peace, and I will speake.

שׁוּן fodit,

fundum ar-

vit. Metapho-

rice, cogitavi,

fodit cogitatio-

ne, intentus vel

attentus fuit

rei alicujus cō-

sistenda, sicut

arator prępa-

rat terram ante

seminatorem.

'Tis but one word in the Hebrew which we translate, *hold thy peace*, and it signifieth properly to dig or plow the ground, and by a metaphor to thinke of, or to meditate, because thoughts goe deep in the soule, a man doth, as it were, plow up his own spirit, while he is meditating or thinking seriously (*Pro. 3. 29.*) *Devise not evill*, or (it is this word) *plow not up evill* ; that's a bad soyle indeed, to be plowing up. They that plow evill, shall sow the wind, and (except they repent) reape the whirlwind. The prophet exhorting *Ephraim* to break up their fallow ground and sow in righteousness, that they might reape mercy (*Hos. 10. 12.*) reproves them (*2. 13.*) for a very unprofitable piece of husbandry, by this word, *Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity, ye have eaten the fruit of lyes*, that is, ye have plotted, devised, and contrived wicked things, and ye have fared accordingly. Now as the word signifieth to meditate, by a metaphor, from digging or plowing ; so by the figure antiphrasis or contrary speaking,

ing, it signifies to forbear doing or speaking, to sit still, or as we render it here, to *hold our peace*, and say nothing. (*Isa: 41. 1.*) *Keepe silence before me, O Islands.* (*Psal: 50. 3.*) *Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence*; that is, he will speak aloud. *Elihu* bespēakes *Job* in the affirmative, *hold thy peace*, be silent.

Some conceive *Job* began to interrupt *Elihu*, or gave some token of dislike, while he was discoursing; as if he had received his speech with disgust, and not only inwardly stomacked at it. But he did not forbear to discover it by some significant gesture or frowne, and that *Elihu* perceiving this, desired him to hold his peace; As if he had sayd, If you desire to reape any benefit by what I speak, be patient, and doe not interrupt me. But I conceive there was no such height nor heate of spirit in *Job* at that time; He began now to be sedate and quiet enough, being somewhat convinced of his former error and intemperance of speech.

But some may say; was it not an over-bold part in *Elihu* a young man to impose silence upon *Job*; or to bid him *hold his peace*?

I answer; *Elihu* doth not bid *Job* hold his peace, either, first, as if he had seene him unwilling to let him speake, or would not heare him any more; *Job* was a very patient hearer; he heard his friends patiently, and he had heard *Elihu* too with silence and patience, yea though *Elihu* offered him leave, yea almost provoked him to speake (*v. 5.*) yet he did not but gave him scope to speake out. Nor did *Elihu* speake this, secondly, as if he slighted *Job*, or thought him a man unable to answer him, or speake to purpose, for presently in the next verse he desireth him againe to speake. Nor thirdly, as if he had such high thoughts of his owne wisdom, and loved so much to heare himselfe speake (as some men doe) that he cared not to heare others, but would engrosse all the discourse. Nor was it, fourthly, because he saw such an affectation in *Job* to speake, that he needed (as the Apostle speaks of some, *Tit: 1. 11.*) *to have his mouth stoppt*. It was not upon any of these or such like reasons, that *Elihu* desired *Job* to hold his peace; but it was either first, that himselfe might speake more clearely, and carry his matter through to his understanding; or secondly, that he might set the matter more home upon his conscience, and move him to consider yet more seriously what he had sayd,

sayd; of the various wayes of Gods dealing with man to humble his soule, and bring him neerer to himselfe; or lastly, that *Job* might perceiue and take notice, that he was the man aymed at in all the foregoing parable. As if he had sayd, Sit downe quietly, and consider with thy selfe, whether all this discourse hath tended, or whether or no thou art not the man intended in it. As Christ when he had spoken that parable of the sower concluded (*Math. 13. 9.*) *He that hath an eare to heare, let him heare*; that is, let him take it home to himselfe; or as Christ concludeth his Epistles to the seven Churches in the second and third Chapters of the *Revelation*, with, *He that hath an eare, let him heare what the Spirit saith to the Churches*; so doth *Elihu* to *Job* in speciall, *Mark well, O Job, and hearken unto me, hold thy peace.*

This silence was made of old in great assemblies (*Majestatemus*) by putting the hand to the mouth, and then stretching it forth. *Acts 12. 17. Acts 13. 16. Chap. 19. 23. Chap. 26. 1.*

If any would know yet more distinctly what *Elihu* meant when he bid *Job* hold his peace? I answer,

First, Negatively, not a bare silence, or saying nothing, but affirmatively, when he sayth, *hold thy peace*; it might note these two things.

First, That he would have him much in the worke of consideration, or to forbear speaking, that he might be more in meditating, and weighing, and laying things to heart; he would have him bring what he had spoken to the ballance of the Sanctuary, and then to his owne heart. A man is never more busie then when he thus holds his peace.

Secondly, When he saith, *hold thy peace*, it might note that he desired his submission to the counsel given, or to be given him; He would have him bridle his tongue, in token that his spirit was brideled. He would have *Jobs* silence say, speake on, I will say nothing, let the truth of God reigne and rule over me by thy word. What *Samuel* answered to the Lord himselfe (*1 Sam. 3. 10.*) *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth*; that should we answer to those who speak to us from the Lord; speak ye, we will heare and hold our peace: or we should say with good *Cornelius*, when *Peter* came to him (*Acts 10. 33.*) *We are all here present before God, to heare all things that are commanded thee of God.* When a man holds his peace (upon these termes) 'tis a signe he layeth
downe.

downe his owne wisdom, and his will, he doth not stand upon his *pantofloes* (as we say) nor abound in his owne sence, but is ready to be delivered or cast into the mould of any holy and wholesome doctrine which shall be delivered unto him. *They are in the fittest frame to hold the truth which others speake, who can withhold themselves from speaking.*

Further, There is a two-fold *holding of the peace*. First, at the workes of God, or at what God doth (*Lev: 10. 3.*) when God had smitten the two sons of *Aaron* dead with fire from heaven, *Aaron held his peace*; that is, he did not murmur at, nor contradict what God had done. That also was *Dauids* temper (*Psal: 39. 9.*) *I was dumbe, I opened not my mouth, because thou Lord didst it.* The Prophet *Jeremy* describes an humbled soule in the same posture (*Lam: 3. 28.*) *He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him.* When God layeth his yoke or crosse upon us, 'tis our duty to be silent and submit (*Zach: 2. 13.*) *Be silent, O all flesh, before the Lord: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation*, that is, the Lord begins to worke, therefore let all men, or men of all sorts and degrees be quiet and say nothing either discontentedly or complainingly. In all these Scriptures, *holding our peace* is called for and commanded or shewed at the workes of God.

Secondly, There is a holding of our peace at the word of God, or at what God speaketh. Thus 'tis when not only the tongue but the heart is silent, and every thought is brought into subjection or captivity to the obedience of Christ. The heart of man often speakes much, and is very clamorous, when he saith nothing with his tongue. That's to hold our peace indeed, when the heart is quieter, let God say or doe what he will. 'Tis not more our duty to *resist the Devill*, that is, all his hellish whisperings and temptations to the doing of evill, then 'tis to *submit to God* in all his speakings and dispensations. *Elihu* speaking in the name of the Lord, faithfully adviseth *Job* in this sence, to *hold his peace*.

Hence learne.

We ought to submit and keep silence when the truth of God is spoken. Or, when the minde of God is brought unto us, there must be no replying but obeying, no disputing but submitting.

They have learned much, who know how and when to say nothing.

thing. *Solomon* saith (*Ecc. 3. 6.*) *There is a time to keep silence, and a time to speake*; but this kind of silence is in season at all times, we ought alwayes to be silent thus, that is, alwayes submit to the minde of God. We need to be minded of this, because the pride and over-weening of man is great. We have need to put a bridle upon our tongues, much more upon our hearts; it is hard to bring our wills and our understandings under; we are apt to strive and struggle when truth comes neere us; yea to kick at it, when it comes very neere and home to us, though indeed the neerer it comes the better, nor can it ever come too neere. The Apostle *James* apprehended this when he gave that admonition (*Chap. 1. 21.*) *Receive with meeknesse, the ingrafted word, which is able to save your soules*: Meeknesse is that grace which moderates anger; a passionate or fierce spirit, receiveth not the word, but riseth up against it, turnes not to it but upon it; and, which is worst of all, turnes it to evill, not to good, turnes light into darknesse; and so the word of life becomes a savour of death for want of a due submission to it. Therefore *hearken, and hold your peace* when the word of God is spoken. Do not say it is but the word of man, because delivered by man; God speaks in and by his faithfull Messengers; ye oppose the authority of the living God, not a mortall dying creature, when you reject the word. And remember, it is not only our duty but our liberty to give up our selves prisoners to the truths of God; we are never so free as when bound by it or to it. And as we should hold our peace at or submit to all the truths of God in all cases, so especially in these three.

First, When we are reprov'd for our sins in practice; then we should not stand excusing what we have done, but repent of it.

Secondly, When we are shewed our errour in opinion; then we should not stand disputing, and arguing for what we hold, but recant it. 'Tis time to hold our peace, when once it appears to us, that we doe not hold the truth. To erre is common to man, but to persevere in an errour, to the defence and patronage of it, is more then inhumane, devilish.

Thirdly, We should hold our peace when our duty is piaine before us; then we should not stand questioning it, but doe it.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to doe (*saith Solomon, Ecc. 9. 10.*
that

that is, whatsoever appears to be a duty) *doe it with all thy might.* Hold thy tongue, but doe not withhold thy hand when once thy hand hath found what must be done. *Elihu* at this time was dealing with *Job* upon all these three poynts ; He told him his sin, that he had been too querulous and impatient, he shewed him his error, that he had been too bold with God, because innocent towards men ; And he pressed him to duty, both that, and how he ought to humble himselfe before the Lord. The Apostle treating about that great poynt of justification, tells us God will at last cause all men to hold their peace. (*Rom: 3. 19.*) *Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God ;* that is, man will have nothing to say, but sit downe silent, and hold his peace, or only say, I am nothing, I have deserved nothing but death and condemnation, when he once understands the holiness and strictness of the law, together with the unholiness and looseness of his owne heart and life.

Hence note.

It speaks yea proclaimes a gracious prudence, to know how and when to hold our peace and say nothing.

When men insist upon their owne conceit and reason, when they logick it unduely with God or men, and will needs seeme to know more then the word teacheth them, what doe they but give evidence against themselves, that as yet they know nothing as the word teacheth, or as they ought to know, and themselves least of all ? 'Tis pride and presumption, not prudence and understanding which opens such mens mouths. We never profit by what we heare, till (in the sence opened) we have learned to *hold our peace.* The counsel which *Elihu* gave *Job*, was to hold his peace ; yet he layd no constraint upon him to refraine necessary speaking, but put him upon it in the next verse.

Vers. 32. *If thou hast any thing to say, answer me ; speak for I desire to justify thee.*

Least *Elihu* should be interpreted to have taken too much upon him, or to have denied *Job* his liberty of speaking, when he

sayd, *hold thy peace*; he here calls him to speake; This is a full-prooffe, that his intent was not to barre him from speaking, but only that he should forbear unnecessary speaking. As if he had sayd, *Now that I have gone thus farre, if I have spoken any thing that thou art unsatisfied in, and dost desire I should explaine my selfe about; speake thy minde freely; for though I have more to say, yet I will not hinder thee from saying what thou canst fairely say for thy selfe, neither will I over-burthen thy memory, with too much at once; therefore come now and answer if thou wilt, or canst to what is already spoken.*

The Hebrew is, *If thou hast words answer me*; that is, if thou hast arguments to defend thy selfe with, or to oppose me; if thou hast such words ready, as have the weight of reason or authority in them to maintaine thy cause, bring them forth, I am not afraid of what thou canst object; neither am I unwilling to heare thy defence.

Some expound *Elihu* speaking Ironically, at least Rhetorically, *If thou hast any thing to say answer me, speake and spare not.* As if he had sayd, *Possibly thou canst set all right, and shew me where I am wrong. Possibly thou thinkest I have spoken amisse, when I sayd, In this thou art not righteous, goe to then, shew me my mistake, or wherein I have misapprehended thee, make it good if thou art able against my assertion, that thou art just and righteous, even in that wherein I have endeavoured to detect thy unrighteousness. Possibly thou mayst bring me to be of thy opinion, and then surely I shall justify thee, and retract my censure of thee.* Rhetoricians call this an

Artificiose prohibito per concessionem.

Simile est illud poetæ. I, sequere Italiam ventum, pete regna per undas.

Virgil: Æniad. 4to.

Artificiall-prohibition, by a concession; or the admitting of another to doe that, which they know, he cannot doe when he hath done his utmost, or (as we say) hath left no stone unturn'd to doe it. But I conceive, *Elihu* spoke plainly to *Job*; and did not like a subtle Orator, put him upon impossibles, but like a sincere friend, soberly and seriously invited him to doe and say as much as was possible in his owne defence. *If thou hast any thing to say; answer me.*

Hence note.

Wise men though they have more to speake, and purpose to speake more, yet are willing that others should speake too.

Though they can speake still, yet they are ready to sit still and

and heare. *The most prudent speakers, are also patient hearers.* Elihu when he began to speake (Chap. 32. 18, 19.) compared himselfe to a full bottle, he was even burdened with his owne conceptions. *I am full of matter* (sayd he there) *the spirit within me constraineth me; Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles.* And though he had not halfe emptied himselfe, yet he could stop his vessel and containe himselfe. *Answer me, I will heare.* Though Elihu was warme in his worke, labouring tooth and nayle to convince and humble Job, and shew him wherein he had exceeded and offended, though he was teaching him to give glory to God, and to abhorre himselfe (as at last he did) repenting in dust and ashes, yet he was unwilling to determine till he had heard him speake, if he had any thing to speake, and a minde to speake it.

Hence note.

'Tis but equall to give him leave to speake for himselfe, with whom we are unsatisfied.

How else can we either get satisfaction, or give an account why we remaine unsatisfied? We must not condemne any man in hast; nor judge him till we have heard him. *Necessary stops are no delays.* They may procure not only a better but a speedier issue of our business, especially in matters of contröversie. Politicians have a rule, *Take time and you may doe any thing.* To make hast slowly is the surest way of making hast. Many a journeying man had rid more miles in a day, if he had not rid too fast. They who will doe all at once, or in a breath, often loose their breath, but seldome doe any thing, that's worth the doing. And as hastines hinders us in doing, so it altogether unfits us for censuring. Time brings forth truth; a sentence deferred, may afterwards be given, but when it is once given, it cannot be recalled; therefore it is good before we censure, to heare every man out; If this moderation and wel-tempered ingenuity were exercised in all our controversies with others, it would be a great helpe to the ending of controversies. And we should either see no reason to condemne many, or condemne them with more reason, had we patience to heare them. But when first, we will not heare an answer, or when secondly; we suppress our opposites with power and violence, whom we cannot answer or convince by

argument ; or thirdly, when we interpret what they ſay in answer to the worst ſence ; or fourthly, when we are glad to finde any weakneſs or insufficiency in their answers, and are ſo haſty to condemne , that we will not give them leave to recollect their thoughts, or thinke better on't to mend their answers, and expaine their meaning, either by ſpeech or writing ; it is impoſſible breaches ſhould be healed, & differences reconciled, or that ever we ſhould come to a cleare & full underſtanding of one another. This offer made by *Elihu* to *Job* is a good patterne , and ſhewes us how to deale with brethren in all ſuch caſes : and that which followeth ſheweth the beſt and nobleſt ground of ſuch amicable condiſcensions, even a willingneſs not only to agree with but to embrace thoſe from whom we differ. That's the generall ſence of what *Elihu* aſſureth *Job*, and would have him confident of in the next words.

For I deſire to juſtifie thee.

As if he had ſayd ; *I have not ſpoken all or any of theſe things to thee, becauſe I would conquer thee, nor doe I now provoke or invite thee to ſpeake, becauſe I have a mind to lye at catch, or entangle thee in thy answers, for I tell thee, my heart and my ayme in this overture, is, I (heartily) deſire to juſtifie thee.*

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The word whereby *Elihu* expreſſeth this deſire, ſignifieth more then a bare deſire.

It notes, firſt, an earneſt deſire, or ſtrength of deſire.

Secondly , A pleaſing deſire, or delightfull deſire.

The higheſt act of deſire is delight ; delight is the intention and ſtrength of affection, or deſire at reſt. As if *Elihu* had ſayd, *Non mihi vo-* I have not ſpoken out of ill will to thee, or deſire of victory over thee, *lupi eſt, ut tuam* I have not ſpoken out of ill will to thee, or deſire of victory over thee, *cauſam injuſta* nor would any thing be more welcome newes to my ſoule, then to ſee *ostendam, velim* juſt cauſe of juſtifying thee ; it doth not pleaſe me at all to prove that *enim eſſe juſtam* thou art not juſt, it would extreemly pleaſe me, even raviſh my heart *nec eſſe in te* with joy if thou couldſt prove thy ſelfe or thy cauſe ſo juſt and fault- *quod reprehendi poſſit.* leſſe, that nothing could be blamed or reproved in either. I deſire

Merc:

P73 eſt non
modo pietatis

to juſtifie thee.

ſed et veritatis
laudem tribue-
re ; ſignificat ſe

That is, not only to judge thee a godly man, or a man fearing God (which I already doe) but to judge that thou haſt in all things both done and ſpoken well, which as yet I doe not, nor can, unleſſe

unlesse thou shewest me better reason for it then hitherto thou halt done. *To justify* another is foure wayes applyed in Scripture ; as was shewed more largely at the second verie of the former Chapter.

magis propendere ad defendendum quam increpandum.
Coc:

First and chiefly 'tis applyed or attributed to God himselfe (*Rom. 8. 33.*) *It is God that justifieth.* God puts man into a state of justification, he justifieth his person so fully, that none can (of right) lay any thing to his charge, much lesse condemne him upon any charge layd against him.

Secondly, Man justifieth God (*Luke 7. 29, 30.*) *And all the people that heard him, and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with the baptisme of John.* God himselfe who is the Judge of all men, is condemned by many men ; and when things are at worst, he alwayes hath some to justifye him. Man justifieth God when he honoureth God, taking his part, and owning both his power and his righteousnesse in whatsoever he doth. It is impossible God should be unjust, and God is pleased to say, we justifye him, when we maintaine his wayes as just and righteous.

Thirdly, Man justifieth himselfe, when he is either lifted up proudly in the thoughts of what he is or hath done well (*Luke 18. 11.*) or when he upon good grounds can maintaine that to be well done which he hath done.

Fourthly, Man justifieth man, when he either consents to, or approves of what he hath done or spoken, whether it be good or bad ; he that approves of a man justifies him, though the man be unjust. (*Prov. 17. 15.*) *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are an abomination unto the Lord.* Let a man be never so wicked, and doe never so wickedly, some through ignorance of his wickednesse, and others through love to and liking of his wickednesse, (being such themselves) will approve of him, and give him their good word. But (as Christ speaks, *Math. 11. 19.*) *Wisdom is justified of her children;* that is, the true lovers and followers of wisdom, having a right knowledge and estimation of her worth, will stand by her, and speake for her, when slighted by the blind and unknowing world. And as this is true of declarative wisdom, so especially of Christ, who is *essentiall wisdom.* His children highly prize and justifye him, while the world condemns and contemns him. In this fourth sence *Elihu* is to be understood here, *I desire to justify thee ;* that

is, to give testimony unto thee, or subscribe thy certificate, that thou art worthy of commendation. Though *Elihu* was a man of a very warme and keene spirit, full of fire, and mettle, yet he discovered a very honest bent, and a well governed intention towards *Job*, in saying, *I desire to justify thee*; for 'tis as if he had said; *It would not please me at all to see cause of further censure, but it would please me fully to see cause of approving and acquitting thee.* Therefore doe but state thy case and make out the merits of it, and I shall yield so soon as I see cause. So then, *Elihu* did not carry himself in this business, first, as a party, or as one that had taken a side, and was resolved to hold it (as some doe) right or wrong, because he had appeared in it. Nor Secondly, was he hurried by passion, or intemperance of spirit. Nor Thirdly, was he hood-wink't by prejudice, or fore-stalled by his opinion against the person. Nor Fourthly, was he engaged by love to contention or hopes of victory. Nor Fifthly, was he purposed to suppress smother or keepe downe the truth. Nor Sixthly, had he any desire to asperse *Job*, and make him appear black. Nor Seventhly, had he a mind to grieve the man, or burthen him with accusations; but declared a cleare candor and much melting compassion towards his afflicted Antagonist, hungry and thirsting, yea even longing for a just occasion to justify him.

Verbum iustifi-
cave sumitur
pro iustitiam
exercere, iuste
ac recte proce-
dere. q. d. sta-
rai apud me
iuxta aequitatis
leges tecum a-
gere. Bold:

Some, I grant, expound this word *justify*, as used here by *Elihu* in a very bare and barren fence, as if it implied only thus much, *I will doe thee right, or I have no mind to doe thee wrong*; but surely the word is much more fruitfull, and beares the signification of a great willingness in *Elihu* to render *Job* as faire as possibly he could, or as his cause would beare to all the world; he waited to understand so much of him and by him, as might enable him to say, he had neither spoken nor done any thing amisse.

Hence note, First.

A good man is glad to see any mans cause or case prove good, or better then he thought it.

The Apostle giving severall Characters of Gospell love or charity, saith (1 Cor. 13. 6.) *It rejoyceth not in iniquity, but rejoyceth in the truth.* As charity rejoyceth not in the doing of iniquity, so neither doth it, when others are found to have done iniquity. But it rejoyceth much, when any who are either suspected or

charged

charged with iniquity, are upon due tryall found cleare and acquitted. *Paul* wished that all who heard him had been not only almost but altogether such as he, except his bonds, (*Acts* 26. 29.) It is a great argument that a man is good and just, when he heartily wisheth that he who hath given occasion to others to think ill of him, may at last appeare better then they thought him.

Secondly note.

A good man seeks not victory but truth, and the good of those he deals with.

When he contends earnestly with others, he desires as earnestly that truth may gaine by that contention. Where a spirit of strife & uncharitableness possesseth the minds of many men, they love to be vexing & trampling upon those they deale with, rather then helping and enforming them. *This evill spirit is the familiar of this age*; That which the Apostle spake (*Phil.* 1. 15.) of not a few who had the name of Gospel Ministers (*some preach Christ even of envy and strife, and some also of good will*; the one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely) the same may be said of many disputers and polemickall writers; they doe it enviously, they doe it out of love to strife and contention, not out of love either to truth or to those with whom they contend and strive; this is a bad spirit, a spirit far unlike that which ruled in *Elihu*; who wished that the sharpest reprehensions he gave *Job*, might end in his justification. There should be such a spirit in man contending with man, as there is in God contending with man; who doth not thunder against sinners, because he would have them perish, or delighteth in their destruction; but doth it, first, to awaken them; secondly, to humble them; thirdly, to convert them; fourthly, to justify them; and lastly, to save them for ever. *I write not these things* (saith the Apostle, *1 Cor.* 4. 14.) *to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warne you.* As if he had said, I intend not to asperse you, or throw dirt upon you, but only advise you to wipe off the dirt that is cast upon you, or to keep your selves out of the dirt. I would either be a means to cleanse you, or provoke you to preserve your selves cleane.

Note Thirdly.

It is our duty to justify those whom we oppose, when they can clear themselves.

As

As *Elihu* spake very ingeniously, so not at all beyond his duty ; we should be glad when they whom we have suspected or charged appeare faire, or better then we suspected ; he that doth so must be justified : as we must not hold the truth of God, so we must not hold the credit of our neighbour in unrighteousness. We should have three ends in dealing and debating with others. First, to convince them of their errors and sins. Secondly, to recover them out of sin and errour. Thirdly, to acquit them in what they appeare and can approve themselves not to have sinned or erred. *Elihu* aimed at and attained the first and second in his debate with *Job* ; and it would have been a greater contentment to him, if (there being no need of those two) he had seene cause only to have done the third. *Speak* (said he.) *for I desire to justifie thee.*

Vers. 33. *If not, hearken unto me, hold thy peace, and I shall teach thee wisdom.*

Elihu having desired *Job* to speake, and he either refusing or having nothing to say, he re-assumed and re-inforced his former counsell.

Hearken unto me, hold thy peace.

These words were opened, (v. 31.) therefore I need not stay upon them here ; *If not, hearken &c.* and indeed what should they doe but hear and submit, who have nothing to answer or reply ? especially when so gainfull an overture is made them for their encouragement to hear, as *Elihu* made *Job* in the next words, which are also the last of this discourse.

And I shall teach thee wisdom.

Elihu may seeme to take much upon him, and shew himself very confident, when he thus undertook and promised to teach *Job* wisdom ; yet doubtless the ground of his confidence was not in himselfe, but in Gods assistance ; and in *Jobs* humble silence. As if he had said, *I see thou wilt not speake, but heare, hear then, and I shall teach thee wisdom ; for God (I hope) will be with us in this matter, and both open my mouth to speak, and thine eares to hear that which is wisdom indeed ; having given thee a heart to receive instruction,*

instruction, he will instruct thee to profit, and make thee wise to know thy duty and doe it, by my ministry, though a weak and unworthy instrument in his hand.

I shall teach thee wisdom. The word which we render to teach *למד* In Kal in another conjugation signifieth to learne; and the Nowne signifieth a leader, or governour. As that first letter Aleph in the Hebrew Alphabet is the leading letter to all that follow, so a Teacher should be a leader, he should goe before those that heare him, by good example as well as by wholsome doctrine. *Be thou an example of the Believers*, saith the Apostle Timothy (1 Epist. 4. 12) who was set up in the Church of Ephesus a Teacher and an Instructor.

Further, when *Elihu* saith, *I will teach thee wisdom*; his meaning is, I shall acquaint thee with that which may make thee wise, or I shall shew thee wherein true wisdom doth consist. And that consists chiefly in these two things. First, in the knowledge of our selves; Secondly, in the knowledge of God; As if *Elihu* had said, *I doubt not but I shall make thee know more fully what thou art, as also who God is.* And it plainly appeares in the close, that *Job* got a fuller light in both by what *Elihu* said to him. He got a fuller soul-sight of the sovereignty and highnesse of God, and a deeper humiliation in the sight of his own sinfullness and vilenesse. He that hath learned and is in the power of these two lessons, is questionless a wise man; and he that faithfully teacheth these two lessons doth not at all overrate his doctrine if he call it wisdom, nor doth he put too high a title upon his paines and endeavours, if he saith to his Auditors or Schollars, I will teach or have taught you wisdom.

Lastly, When *Elihu* said, *I will teach thee wisdom*; we must not conceive that he looked upon *Job* as unwise or ignorant; *Elihu* knew well enough he had not to doe with a child or an idiot, but with a man of knowledge, with a man who was skilfull in the word of righteousness; whose senses (as the Apostle expresseth it, Heb. 5. 14.) were exercised to discern both good and evill. His meaning then, when he said *I will teach thee wisdom*, was only this, I will teach thee to be wiser and more knowing in some necessary truths, then as yet thou art, or at least, hast appeared to be. Or we may give his sence in the language of the Apostle, (2 Cor. 1. 24.) I will teach thee wisdom, not as having dominion over thy faith, but as a helper of thy joy.

Hence note, First.

There are none so wise, none so holy, but they may learne more wisdom, to be yet more holy.

'Tis out of question, he was never good, who thinks he can be no better; nor doth he yet know any thing aright, who saith he needs know no more. It is very sad (which is the case of many, 2 Tim. 3. 7.) to be ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth: Yet they who (through grace) have been enabled to come to the knowledge of the truth must be ever learning; and the more any man doth know, the more he seeth his need, and the more willing he is, to be taught and know more. The feare of God that is wisdom, saith Job, (Chap. 28. 28.) and to depart from evil, is understanding; and God testified of Job that he feared him, and eschewed evil, in the first verse of this Booke; now if so wise, to good a man as Job might learne wisdom, let none think themselves too wise or too good to learne.

Secondly, Note.

True wisdom consists in the true knowledge of our selves, and of God.

This was the theame or subject upon which *Elihu* insisted, he was not teaching Job humane, philosophicall, or naturall wisdom, but heavenly and divine wisdom; the greatest meere naturall Philosophers in the world (which title sounds them, lovers of wisdom) were meere strangers to that, which we call true wisdom; and (as the Apostle chargeth them, Rom. 1. 21, 22.) became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened, professing themselves to be wise, they became fools.

Thirdly, Note.

There is nothing worth the learning or knowing, but that which makes us truly wise.

For that only sheweth us the way to be truly happy. 'Tis our wisdom to work for a right end, and that work can never attaine its end but by the choyce of right means. Through desire (saith Solomon, Prov. 18. 1.) a man having separated himself, seeketh and intermedleth with all wisdom. The desire of all things (say Naturallists)

Naturalists) especially of all men runs out to good. And the better any man is, the better is that good which he desireth, yea if any man be truly good he desireth that which is best; for the enjoyment of God wherein alone happinesse doth consist, is his ultimate and highest end. But what doth he to reach this end? *Solomon* poynts us to two things: First, he separateth himselfe from all those lets and impediments which stop up the way, or lye crosse to his desire. Secondly, *He seeketh and intermedleth with all wisdom*, with all reall and substantiall wisdom, (as the word there used signifieth) for he knoweth that nothing but such wisdom, acted in wise wayes, is proper and successefull for the promoting of that noble end. Now if nothing but wisdom can lead us to that end, what is there worth the learning or knowing except that which makes us wise?

Fourthly, From that frame of spirit which *Elihu* observed in *Job*,

Note.

They that are humble and meek are fittest to learne wisdom.

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble. (*Jam.* 4. 6.) The humble soule hath received grace already, and that grace received is the way to all grace. (*Psal.* 25. 9.) *The meek will be guide in judgment, the meek will be teach his way.* The way of God is wisdom, and they whom God teacheth shall undoubtedly learne it.

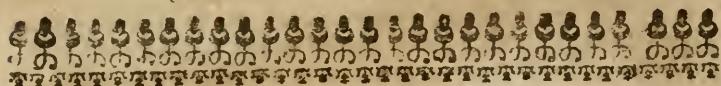
Lastly.

To teach spirituall wisdom, or to teach man how to be spiritually wise, is the best lesson that can be taught.

They are blessed Masters who make such Schollars. The whole discourse of *Elihu* is about spirituall wisdom, not about the wisdom of the world which God will destroy; not how to climbe the pinnacles of honour, and get high in the world, not how to gather riches, and to lade our selves with thick clay; it was not how to be great or rich, but it was how to be holy and humble, how to give glory to God, and be fitted for glory with God; these were the lessons of wisdom which *Elihu* taught *Job*, and

these are lessons chiefly to be taught and learned by every man, who undertakes to be a teacher, or desires to be a learner. Thus *Elihu* hath concluded his first discourse with a promise to teach *Job* wisdom, and how well he performed and made good his promise, will appeare, to his praise, in opening the following Chapters.

J O B,



JOB, Chap. 34. Vers. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Furthermore, Elihu answered and said.

*Heare my words, O ye wise men, and give ear to me,
ye that have knowledge.*

*For the ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth
meat.*

*Let us chuse to us judgement : let us know among
our selves what is good.*



He former Chapter concluded *Elihu's* first discourse with *Job* : and we may well suppose that he had made some pause ; to try whether *Job* would give him an answer, as he had Invi-
red him to doe. But perceiving him silent, and forbearing to speak ; he himselfe proceeds to this second speech.

In which we may consider :

First, His Preface, in the foure first verses.

Secondly, His charge or accusation brought against *Job*, from the 5th verse Inclusively to the 10th Exclusively.

Thirdly, We have the refutation of what *Job* said of himselfe, and seem'd to charge upon God ; this is prosecuted with much variety from the 10th to the 30th verse of this Chapter.

In the foure last verses, *Elihu* gathers up the strength of all he had sayd, and makes his Conclusion.

The foure verses now under hand, are a Preface to this second undertaking of *Elihu* with *Job* : In which we have

First, His transition from what he had said, to what he was about to say, in the first verse ; *Furthermore.*

Secondly, We have his address or application to those about him for audience and diligent attention to what he had to say,
in

in the 2d and 3d verses; *Heare O ye wise men, &c.*

Thirdly, We have his motion; and the motion which he makes, is, that the whole proceedure of the businesse might be both faire and friendly, as also judicious and just; or that they might to the utmost endeavour after a right understanding and discerning of the matter before them: v. 4. *Let us chuse to our selves judgement, &c.*

Vers. 1. *Furthermore, Elihu answered and said, or, and Elihu answered and said.*

It may here be questioned, by what propriety of speech it can be said that *Elihu* answered, seeing *Job* made no reply to what he had said before.

To this query, I say, First, that in Scripture both the beginning of a speech, and the continuance of it, where nothing hath been interposed, is called an answer; we find it so frequently in the Gospel (*Math: 11. 25.*) *Then Jesus answered and said:* there was no question, no discourse antecedent, yet it is called an answer. The like is observable in the 17th of *Mathew*, v. 4. and *John* 2. 18.

Secondly, We may resolve the doubt thus; though *Job* said nothing now to which *Elihu* made answer; yet he had said much which was yet unanswered, altogether unanswered by *Elihu*; therefore *Elihu* might say, that he proceeded to answer the many matters of *Jobs* former speech, to which as yet he had given no answer. This may suffice to shew how or why that which he said further, was an answer, let us now consider what *Elihu answered and said.*

Vers. 2. *Heare my words, O ye wise men, and give care to me ye that have knowledge.*

As if he had said, I will not be my owne Judge in this matter, I referre it to the judgement of wise and knowing men, let them determine it.

We may here take notice; First, of the character given the persons to whom *Elihu* spake, or did address his speech, they were *wise men, men that had knowledge.*

Secondly, We may take notice of the earnestness of his exhortation or admonition, to mind what he had to say, *Give ear,*

O ye wise men, O ye men that have knowledge.

For the clearing of these words, we must enquire, first, who is a *wise man*? who, a *man that hath knowledge*? a *wise man* in distinction to a man that hath knowledge, is a man of mature judgement, of cleare understanding, and solid prudence, in the managing either of discourses or actions. A *man of knowledge* is one that hath improved his understanding by study, reading, or long experience. Some men are wise, who yet have not much knowledge; and some have a great deale of knowledge, who have very little wisdom. Now *Elihu* speaks to his auditory, as consisting or made up both of wise and knowing men; *O ye wise men*, that have great understanding and judgement; and, *O ye men of knowledge*, that have attained to learning and skill in all things knowable, heare my words and give eare. Here was a choice and select auditory, wise men, and men of knowledge.

Secondly, It may be queried; whom *Elihu* intends by these wise men, and men that had knowledge?

Some conceive, he takes in all that were present at that long and solemn conference between *Job* and his friends; and that he decipheres the whole Company under these titles of wise and knowing men, inviting them all to attend what he had to say, they being so well fitted to judge what he had to say; *It is not good to give flattering titles to men, but it is good to give them winning titles, such as may gaine upon them for their good.*

Yet I rather conceive, that *Elihu* speaks more specially to some that were there present; namely, to *Job's* three friends, who had had the matter in hand before, and now stood out: to these men he now turnes himselfe, and bends his discourse, saying, *Heare O ye wisemen: hearken ye that have knowledge*; that is, ye *Eliphaz*, *Zophar*, and *Bildad*, who have all this while engaged with *Job*, give me leave to speake a few words in your eares, and I pray attend unto me.

Thirdly, Supposing that they, specially, were the wise and knowing men to whom he spake. It may be question'd againe, under what notion he called them wise and knowing men.

Some say, he called them so Ironically, putting a close or secret scorn upon them; As if he had sayd, *Heare me, O ye wise men, and hearken, O ye knowing men, ye that for years and age should be indeed knowing and wise men; and are so in the reputation*

of others, as well as by your owne profession and pretention; *Ye who came from farre to undertake this weighty worke, the comforting and counselling of this your afflicted friend, see now how well you have acquitted your selves, and answered the expectation raised both of you and by you. Have ye not comforted him fairely, and counselled him wisely? Doe ye not see how short you are of your owne propalls? and how ill you have handled the matter, he remaining as farre from conviction, satisfaction, or consolation, as when you first began with him?* Thus some carry the sence, but I shall not stay upon it, nor doe I conceive that *Elihu* spake Ironically, but plainly, and in good earnest, not only calling them wise and knowing men, but judging and believing they were so. Of these he beggs audience.

Heare and give eare.

To *heare* is a naturall act; a man that hath ears cannot chuse but *heare* (unlesse he stop them) when any thing is spoken: but to *give eare*, is, as I may say, an artificiall act, a studied act, yea a spirituall act, when the matter spoken of is spirituall. *Elihu* doth not call for a bare hearing of words, but for a studious hearing of the matter which should be presented to them; *heare and give eare*; or as the Elegancy of the Hebrew may be rendred, *ear my words*: for the word which we render to *give eare*, signifies also the *ear*, *ear my words*. We say of a thing that we desire another would reach to us, *pray hand it hither*, putting the denomination of the Organ or Instrument upon the act; so by a like Elegancy, it is here sayd, *Ear my words*; that is, *heare* studiously and diligently, with an holy art and skill. As there is an art in speaking, so there is a great, if not a greater art in hearing; *ear my words*, or, *give eare to me ye men that have knowledge*.

From the Consideration of the parties here spoken to, wise and knowing men.

Note.

The wise, and knowing, are to heare as well as speake.

They that are wise, need more wisdom, and they that are knowing, may improve their knowledge by hearing; They who know many, yea most truths, may yet know more truths; and if any know all truths, they may yet know every truth more. This
caused

Non est auribus percipere sive aurizare, si fas esset ita loqui. Rab: Mord- Et quia auribus velut brachijs statere pondervantur quæ audivimus, ipsæ bilances eodem quo aures nominæ Non appellantur. Et verbum audiendi ponderare significat.
Bold:

caused the Apostle to professe (2 Pet: 1. 12.) *I will not be negligent to put you alwayes in remembrance of these things, though ye know them, and be establisht in the present truth.* As the ignorant ought to heare that they may know, so they who have knowledge, ought to heare, that they may be more knowing; as they that are fooles, ought to heare that they may be wise; so they that are wise ought to heare that they may be yet wiser. (Pro: 1. 5.) *A wise man will heare, and will encrease learning.* Solomon having sayd in the former verse, that he spake these Proverbs, *To give subtilty to the simple, to the young men knowledge and discretion;* lest any should say, if your Proverbs or wise sentences are so plaine and easie, that the simple may sound them, and young men comprehend them, then what profit shall wise and learned men get by reading or hearing them? shall not they loose their labour and mispend their time in the study of them? No, saith he, the greatest Clerkes and ripest wits may gather instruction from them, as well as the simple vulgar, and greener heads. Their depth will not drowne a lambe, and they are deep enough to swim a Leviathan. And therefore as a wise man will heare, that is, is willing to heare, that he may encrease learning; so let not the wisest thinke themselves too wise to heare, for they may encrease their learning, how learned soever they are. And as the wisest may learne every day, so they that are truly wise, doe learne every hearing day, as the same Solomon tells us (Prov: 9. 8.) *Give instruction to a wise man; and he will be yet wiser.* They are the most foolish of all men, who thinke themselves so wise that they need no more instruction, and so knowing that they need learn no more knowledge. The word of God it is fitted for all sorts and sizes of men, it is for the ignorant, and for the knowing; it is for the foolish, and for the wise; it is milke for babes, and strong meate for men; it is for them that are out of the Church to bring them in; and for those that are within the Church to build them up (Eph: 4. 13.) *Till we all come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ;* till we are wise and knowing to perfection, and fullness of stature (which will not be on this side glory) we have need to give eare, and heare, for the perfecting of our knowledge, and the hightning of our stature.

*Sapientum est
velle discere.*

Againe, These wise men were called to heare and give eare,

not only that they might learn and encrease knowledge by what was spoken, but to judge aright of what was spoken; for this was not so much the hearing of a Sermon (as I may say) as of a dispute, or the debate of a Controversie; and therefore wise men were desired to heare it, that they might be able to judge, and give their opinion, (as 'tis sayd in the 4th verse) *Let us chuse to our selves judgement, and know among our selves what is good.*

Hence note, Secondly.

We had need to heare and give eare, or to heare diligently, before we judge either of things or persons.

Though we may judge rightly of that we have not heard, or of that which we have heard slightly, yet we are not right Judges of any matter till we have heard it. 'Tis possible to hit upon a right judgement blind-fold; but Judges must not be blind, nor judge blind-fold. To judge right, not knowing it to be so, shall have no better reward then a wrong judgement. Yea they that are called to judge, must both heare and give eare, else they may quickly give wrong judgement.

Againe, *Elihu* is speaking here to wise and good men, yet how strictly doth he exhort them? *Heare and give eare.*

Hence note.

Good men are often dull of hearing, and had need to be put forward.

Christ tells his Disciples that many are judicially so, and we know that all are naturally so (*Math: 13. 15.*) and the Apostle tells the *Hebrewes* they were so (*Chap: 5. 11.*) where treating of *Christ called of God, an high Priest after the order of Melchisedeck*, he concludeth, *of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing.* But how did their dullness of hearing make those things hard to be spoken or uttered? may it not be easie enough for a man to utter that which others are dull to heare? I answer, the Apostles meaning seemes to be this? It was hard for him to utter or expound them so, as they might perceive the cleare truth of those great mysteries, because their internal eare, or apprehending faculty was weake and dull. There is a stoppe in the eare of man, and 'tis hard to pull it out. When any one speaks to purpose, 'tis the duty of those that are present

present to heare: and yet he that speakes had need to invite and presse all to heare, yea to heare and give eare. The words of the wise are goads to provoke and pricke us on to heare the truth, as well as nayles to fasten it- (*Eccle: 12. 11.*) *Elihu* having called wise men to heare or eare his words, sheweth the use or force of the eare in the next verse.

Vers. 3. *For the ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.*

In this verse *Elihu* gives the reason why he so earnestly exhorted them to heare and give ear; *The ear tryeth words*, that is, by the hearing of the ear, words are tryed. It is the office of the eare to conveigh words to the understanding, that so a judgement may be made of them, before they are either received or rejected.

The word which we translate *to try*, signifies to try as gold is כִּרְוֶה *pericula*
tryed in the fire: the eare is, as it were, a furnace wherein words *fecit, probavit.*
are tryed, the ear will discover whether what is sayd be dross or pure mettall. The Prophet (*Zach: 13. 9.*) speaketh of a *third part* of men that should be brought thorow the fire and tryed; as the fire of affliction and persecution tryeth persons, so man hath a fire and a touchstone in his eare which tryeth words. The ear is given not only to heare a sound of words, not only to understand the general meaning of words what they signifie in any language, but the eare is given to try the sense and soundness of words. And when *Elihu* saith *words*, speaking indefinitely, he includeth all words of one sort or other; it tryeth good words, and it tryeth bad words; it tryeth heavenly words, and it tryeth earthly words; it tryeth naturall words, and it tryeth spirituall words, the truth or falshood of words are brought to tryall, at the barre and tribunall of the eare. But in what manner or after what similitude doth the eare try words? The answer followeth.

as the mouth tasteth meat.

In the 12th Chapter we had the same expression, and therefore I shall not stay upon it here. Only there the sentence is made up by a particle Copulative; *The ear tryeth words, and the mouth tasteth meat.* Here by a particle of likeness; *The eare tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.* There is a faire analogy or

proportion, between the eare and the mouth, in discriminating their proper objects. Hearing and taſting, are two of thoſe five excellent uſefull ſenſes which God hath planted in the nature of man, the other three are ſeeing, ſmelling, feeling. Here we have a compariſon between two of the five ſenſes; look what the mouth is to meat, the ſame is the ear to words. In the mouth the ſenſe of taſting is placed as a Judge to diſcerne between good and bad, ſavory and unſavory meates; and the eare of a man which receiveth words, is accompanied with an underſtanding, whereby we apprehend what is true, what is falſe, what is to be approved, and what reſuſed. And the compariſon runs yet more clearly, while we conſider, that as the food which the mouth receiveth is prepared for the helpe of our natural or bodily life, ſo the words of inſtruction which the eare receiveth are prepared for the food of our ſoules, and the maintaining of our ſpirituall life.

Some conceive the compariſon is not here made between the two ſenſes of taſting and hearing, but that both are compared to thoſe wiſe and knowing men ſpoken of, and to whom appeale is made in the former verſe. For as all the ſenſes are not fitted to judge of words and meates, but only the eare and palate; ſo all men are not fit nor capable to judge of weighty matters and profound queſtions, but only wiſe and knowing men. And ſo according to this interpretation, both or either of theſe ſenſitive faculties, and both or either of their properties, are alike compared to wiſe and learned men, who are able not only to underſtand the ſound of words, but alſo exerciſe a judgement upon them, both to diſcerne and determine what there is of truth and right in them. Hence that ſaying of the Ancient, *Wiſdome is a ſavory knowledge*. Wiſe men taſt and ſavour the things which they know. He ſurely was a wiſe man who ſayd of the word of God (*Jer. 15. 16.*) *Thy words were ſound, and I did eate them, and thy word was to me the joy and rejoycing of my heart. Heare, O ye wiſe men, and give ear to me ye that have knowledge; the ear tryeth words, as the mouth taſteth meat*; that is, as the ear of a man tryeth words, and as the mouth of a man doth taſt meat; ſo wiſe and knowing men try and taſt that which is ſpoken and heard. Thus both theſe ſenſitive faculties, their properties and powers are compared to wiſe men, who doe not only heare the voyce of him that ſpeaketh, but ſit downe to conſider it. The mouth having taken meat and

chawed

*Sapientia eſt
ſapida ſcientia.*

chawed it, taste it, and makes a judgement of it ; Thus wise men deal with all they hear; so that, look what these two natural faculties doe with naturall things ; with words naturally spoken, with meat naturally eaten; the same, they who are wise and knowing do to what is spoken spiritually and rationally, they try and judge it.

But I conceive, we need not insist strictly upon this ; For whether we compare these two senses in their severall operations to wise men, or whether we compare them in their operations one with another, yet (according to the sense of our translation) the meaning of *Elihu* is the same, namely, that those wise men to whom he spake, should not only hear but try what they heard, because they had received a power so to do; *for the ear tryeth words, even as the mouth tasteth meat.*

There is a twofold eare, there is an outward eare, and an inward eare : And so a twofold tryall : The outward eare tryeth words of what signification they are, whether they are as we say good English, or Latine, &c. It tryeth them also as to their grammaticall sense, or the construction of what is spoken in the letter : The inward eare or understanding tryeth them as to their logical sense, scope and tendency, as to their use, and force in the matter they are spoken to. Both wayes *the eare tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meate* ; only with this difference, that the tryall which the mouth makes is meerly sensitive, and both begun and perfected in the mouth ; but the tryall which the ear makes is chiefly intellectuall, it is begun at the ear, but perfected by the understanding. It is the mind which judgeth, the eare only brings in the report of things to the mind.

Hence Note.

First, *The sense of hearing is a great mercy, and of great use to mankind.*

The eare is the chiefe Gate or inlet to the soul ; not were our eares given only for an Ornament to the head, but for the enriching and bettering of the heart. The naturally rationally given to heare and try words is a mercy ; but when a spiritually rational ear is given with it to heare and try words, that's a mercy indeed. *Solomon* saith (*Prov. 20. 12.*) *The hearing eare, and the seeing eye, the Lord hath made even both of them.* These naturall senses are of Gods own creation, and the use of them his blessing, yet

Avis interna dicitur v's, quæ vox alibi legitur in Græcæ editione pro v's, cum sit ipsa mens, quæ verba et res djudicat. Drus.

Audem audientem dicit audientem verbi obedientem. Beda.

yet common to all mankind good and bad ; but the spirituall senses of seeing and hearing, are a speciall priviledge promised to the elect, and a fruit of Gospel grace. (*Isa. 35. 5.*) *Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the eares of the deafe shall be unstopped.* He meaneth it not either only or chiefly of the bodily eyes and eares (though Christ wrought miracles upon them, and healed both the blind and deafe in the dayes of his flesh) but of the eyes and eares of the soul, which are often darke and stopt while the other are free enough in the exercise of their severall faculties. The seeing eye, which both *Solomon* and *Isaiah* intend, is the eye which so seeth as that it followeth the good which it seeth; and that's their hearing eare which beleeveeth and obeyeth what it heareth. A superficiall seeing eye is a blind eye, and a forniell hearing eare is a deafe eare in the sight and account of God. We say it is the symptome of some distemper or growing disease upon the body, when the pallate doth not rellish meate ; Surely it argueth a diseased and sick soul, when we have no mind to heare nor find rellish in the word of God.

Secondly, Note.

Words are not to be received nor submitted to, nor beleaved as true, till they are tryed.

Itching eares are bad, (*2 Tim. 4. 3.*) *Trying eares are good.* You will not swallow your meat till you have chewed and tasted it ; nor should you swallow words, till you have tryed them ; why else have we eares to heare ? why are we trusted with reason to judge things with ? or with rules to judge them by ? There is no greater Tyranny in the World, then to command a man to beleeve (by an implicit faith) as others beleeve ; or to impose our opinions and assertions upon those that hear them, and not to give them liberty to try them. This is to be at once (as the Apostle *James* expresseth it, (*Chap. 3. 1.*) *many Masters,* or many Masters where we should not be one.

But some will say, when the Word of God is preached, is that to be tryed by men ? have we a liberty to take that into consideration or to take and refuse it as we are perswaded in our own judgments ?

Answer, The word of God is not to be brought to the barre nor to be tryed by man. The word of God is our Judge, therefore

fore ought not to be judged by us; the word of God is perfect, and how can we that are imperfect judge that which is perfect. The word of God is truth, and all men are lyars; we are not therefore to judge the word of God, nor try that: Yet when any man speaks of or from the word of God, we are to try what he speakes; that is, whether what he speaks be according to the word of God, and his doctrine or interpretation grounded on the Text. Every one that speaks about spirituall things professeth he brings the word of God, and it must be tryed whether he doth so or no. It is a truth to which all are to submit (without dispute) by beleeving that *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, to wash away their sins with his blood.* This is the word of God: yet when this truth is Preached, we may consider whether it be managed according to the word of God or no. This great doctrine, which contains the summe of the Gospel, may have such things mingled with it, as are not to be received for the word of God. Some in the primitive time thought and taught that there was no salvation by Christ unlesse they still kept the ceremoniall Law and were circumcised; though they held that fundamentall truth, that Christ dyed to save sinners; yet when they came to the explication of it, they destroyed it by urging a necessity of continuing the ceremoniall Law: whereas others judged rightly that faith only, without the use of any Jewish ceremony, purifieth the heart. Therefore a counsell of spirituall and godly wise men was called *to consider of this matter.* (*Acts 15. 6.*) What to doe? not to try the Word of God, but to try which of those two different opinions was according to the Word of God. Thus when we hear a Sermon, though the Word of God and Christ crucified be the generall subject of it, and that is not to be tryed, but received by faith and obeyed; yet what is spoken upon it and delivered about it as the mind of God in the Scripture, that is to be tryed. (*1 Cor. 2. 15.*) *He that is spirituall, tryeth, or judgeth all things.* And againe (*1 Cor. 14. 29.*) the Apostle gives this counsell about prophesying, *Let one or two speak, and let the others judge;* what? the Word of God, no! but whether they speake according to the word of God, or no; In this sense every one must judge for himselfe, we must not take all for granted, but try what we heare by the eare, as we doe what we eat by the mouth.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Note.

A spiritually judicious and considerate man will take time to judge of things that are spoken, as the palate doth of meates that are eaten.

The eare tryeth words as the mouth tasteth meat ; God hath given man a faculty for that end, and he is to use his faculty. We commonly say, *Look before you leape*. Surely then we should tast before we eate, and prove all things whether they are good or no, before we (electively) hold that which is good. (*1 Thes. 5. 21.*) *The noble Bereans received the word with all readinesse of mind ; yet they would make no more hast then good speed to receive it, for (as the Text saith, Acts 17. 11.) They searched the Scriptures dayly whether those things were so.*

Fourthly, Here are two Organs of sense spoken of, *the eare* and *the mouth*, both are of great use to man, but one of them, *the eare* is of a more frequent and noble use. Beasts have both mouths and eares ; but because theirs is only a sensitive life, they make more use of their mouths then of their eares. Whereas man whose life is racionall, yea and spirituall too, must or ought to make more use of his eares then of his mouth.

How doth this reprove all those who are more in trying meats, then in trying words ? or more for tasting, then they are for hearing ? It was a complaint of some in the former age, that they made themselves like bruit beasts, which having both those powers of hearing and tasting, have yet no regard to hearing, but are all for feeding and eating. They carry it like beasts, and are more bruitish then a beast, who employ their mouths more then their eares. A beast is made in that low forme, to live to eat, and worke, and so to dye ; man is of a higher forme, next to that of Angells, and for him to spend his time in eating and drinking, as if his worke lay at his mouth, not at his ear, is to degrade himself and lead a bruitish life. The Apostle brings in such bruits speaking thus, (*1 Cor. 15. 32.*) *Let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall dye* ; not a word of using their eares : they say not, come let us hear the word of God, let us seek bread for our soules, but come, let us eat and drink ; now for a man to be so much in eating, as to neglect hearing and meditating, what doth he but make himselfe like a beast of the earth, who should be like the
Angells

Angels in Heaven, dayly rising up to a spirituall and heavenly life ; God lifts us up to Heaven (as I may say) *by the eares*. Our eares were not given us only to heare delightfull sounds, or to commune one with another about the affaires of this life ; the use of the eare is yet more noble, even to helpe us in the receiving of all saving and sanctifying knowledge. *Faith comes by hearing*, (Rom. 15. 17.) and so doth every grace, both as to the implan- tation and growth of it, till we come to glory. Therefore consi- der how you use this excellent sense of hearing, and how you im- prove in spirituals by what you have heard. We were made after the Image of God in knowledge and righteousnesse, and it should be the great designe of our lives to get this image renewed ; and that is done at the eare, 'tis wrought by hearing ; faith, repentance, and every grace come in and are wrought at the eare. Some scoffe at this latter age, calling it *a hearing age, not a working age*; we (say they) are much for *ear-work*, little for *hand-work* ; all for Preaching, nothing for doing ; nor can this reproach be quite wiped off, seeing with our plenty of Preaching, there is so little practising ; as if men had turned all the members of their body into eares, and were nothing but hearing : To doe nothing but heare, or to heare and doe nothing, to heare much and act little, is a high provocation. To have a swel'd head and a feeble hand is the disease of Religion. Yet let not voluptuous Epicures who are all for the palate and belly-cheere think to excuse themselves, for not hearing, or for seldome hearing, because some who hear much are found doing little, or seldome do what they hear : for as these shall be condemned by the word which they have heard and not done, so shall these for not hearing the word which would have shewed them what to doe. It hath been anciently said, *The belly hath no eares*, nor will they either mind hearing, or mind what they hear, who mind their bellies (not for hunger and the support of nature, that is (as Solomon speaks (Eccles. 10. 17.) for strength but) for drunkennesse or surfer. When a voluptu- ous person desired *Cato* that he might live with him : No, said *Cato*, I like not your society, I doe not love to converse with a man who useth his mouth more then his eares ; who is busied more to please his tast in eating and drinking, then to enrich his under- standing by hearing and discoursing. The Apostle (Tit. 1. 12. referring them to one of their own Poets) calleth the *Cretians*

Cum eo vivere non possum cui palatum magis sapiat quam cor. Plutar- chus in vita Catonis.

evill beasts, slow bellies. They were not slow to fill their bellies, but their full bellies (their belly being their God, as he told some among the *Philippians*, Chap. 3. 19.) made them slow, yea reprobate to every good word and worke. *Solomon* gives man a great charge when he saith (*Prov.* 23. 23.) *Buy truth, and sell it not.* The mart for those most precious commodities grace and truth, is kept (not at the belly, but) at the eare ; there we buy *without money, and without price* both grace and truth ; to get these is to be wise merchants. The best market we can make, the best trade we can drive is with and at our eares : *The eare tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat.* And from this *Elihu* infers.

Vers. 4. *Let us chuse to our selves judgment ; let us know among ourselves what is good.*

This verse contains the second request which *Elihu* made to *Jobs* friends ; The summe of it is, that they might proceed judiciously and fairly in the cause before them. As if he had said, *Seeing it is the office of the eare to try words, as the mouth tasteth meat ; let us see what we can do with our eares towards the determination of this matter.* *Job* hath often wished to find one with whom he might debate and try this cause in judgment ; let us give him his wish, and having thoroughly weighed the matter and merits of his cause, let us see what justice will award him. *Let us chuse to our selves judgment, &c.*

Let us chuse.

To elect or chuse is the worke of the will. And to chuse what is good, what is right, is a gracious work of a renewed will ; as Gods Election of us from Eternity, so our Election of God and the things of God at any time, is a very gracious worke.

This affirmative act, To chuse to us judgement, seemes to imply a negative, the rejecting or laying aside of whatsoever is contrary to or a hindrance of Judgement ; that is, the laying aside, First, of all animosities or undue heates of spirit ; Secondly, of all prejudices and undue prepossessions ; Thirdly, of all groundlesse suspicions and jealousies of the person we have to deal with, we can never chuse judgement, till we are cleare of all these.

The original word rendred to chuse, signifies in the nounce, a

young man, a man in the flower of his age, in the best of his life, when his breasts (as *Job* spake at the twentieth Chapter) are full of milke, and his bones of marrow; and the reason is given, because our younger time is our chusing time, as to our way in this world; it should be so much more for heaven, or the things of another world. *Remember now thy Creator in the dayes of thy youth*, saith *Solomon* (Eccl. 12. 1.) Some render those words expressly, *In the dayes of thy elections or chusings*; As if he had sayd, Remember to chuse God in thy chusing dayes, when thou chusest thy calling in which to live, when thou chusest a wife, with whom to spend thy life, then be sure and remember above all things to chuse God. When *Moses* was a young man, he was famous for this Choice (Heb. 11. 25, 26.) *He chose the reproach of Christ rather then the riches of Egypt*; when he had all the riches and honours of *Egypt* presented to him, and courting him on the one side, and the reproach of Christ, affliction, poverty, disgrace, threatning him on the other side, he chose these rather; who would thinke that man wise who should chuse the reproach of Christ (in appearance nothing but dirt and dross) before the riches of *Egypt*? yet *Moses* never shewed his wisdom and learning so much in all the learning of the *Egyptians*, as he did in that Choice.

In diebus electionum tuarum. Mont:

Let us chuse Judgement.

Judgement may be taken two wayes; First, for the act of enquiry, let us discourse and debate this matter, to find out what is just; Judgement is the result or sentence given upon hearing and debate. And most properly a right sentence is Judgement; and that by Judgement *Elihu* meanes a right sentence, appears clearly from the next words.

Judicium est cause inquisition.

Judicium pro aequo. Merc.

And let us know among our selves what is good.

Let us know, that is, let us so try by the ear what shall be spoken, that we may come to a right knowledge, to a right gust or tast of what is good. There is a two-fold knowledge; First, of simple intelligence, when we know any thing as it is precisely in its owne nature, true or false, good or evil; Secondly, of approbation, when we conclude what we know, to be true or good. We may take in both here, especially the latter; It being (doubt-

Communis hic sit nobis propositus scopus, ut accurata judicii lance quæ habemus in hac causa dista sunt probemus, et quod optimum est approbellemus. Scult:

iesse) the desire of *Elihu* to find truth and goodness (if it were to be found) on *Jobs* side.

And when he saith, *That we may know what is good*; we may understand it either Comparatively or Positively; *that we may know what is good*; is, first, that we may know good from evil; Secondly, that we may know among good things, what is better, yea what is best; let us not only distinguish between good and bad, but between good and better, better and best. The reason of man is able to put a difference not only between wheat and tares, but if you bring him severall samples of wheat, or other graine, he is able to judge which is the better, which is best; a knowing man will judge to two pence in a bushell which is best; so in all other commodities we not only judge between that which is good, and that which is stark nought, but when we have many parcels and particulars of any kinde before us good and usefull, we judge which is the best, which the principall.

Thus in spiritualls, we are not only to judge of things so farre as to know good from evil (which yet is a very good piece of knowledge; for many put *darkness* for *light*, and *light* for *darkness*; *bitter* for *sweet*, and *sweet* for *bitter*, as the Prophet complained (*Isa.* 5. 20.) that is, they huddle all things together in a Chaos of confusion) but it should be our care to know good from good, yea to know what excells among things that are excellent. 'Tis well when we know truth from falshood, but we should labour to know which among truths is the most precious truth. *Paul* having spoken of what was good, yea of the best gifts, saith, *Yet I will shew you a more excellent way* (*1 Cor.* 12. 31.) As if he had sayd sayd, This is a good way you are in, the exercise of the best gifts, but here's a more excellent way, the exercise of grace. Thus here I take good, not so much Positively as Comparatively, *Let us know what is good*, that is, what is best, and what is best of all.

Let us chuse to our selves Judgement: and know among our selves that which is good.

First, In that he saith, *Let us chuse to our selves Judgement.*
Observe.

We must consider deliberately and maturely before we pass Judgement.

Judgement.

Judgement is a choice thing, and must be made upon choyce ; it is not to be snatched up hastily, but duely chosen. They that are upon the choyce either of things or persons, should be much in Consideration. How uncomely (besides unrighteous) is it, to judge men or matters rashly, to be hurried on to election with passion, or to judge upon heare-sayes and Conjectures? This is not to chuse Judgement, but to snatch it up ; to chuse Judgement is to doe it with mature deliberation ; there must be much weighing, else properly no judging ; rash judgement is usually wrong judgement ; and that layeth us open to another judgement, *Judge not that ye be not judged*, is Christs warning (*Math: 7. 1.*) that is, doe not judge hastily, or harshly, doe not judge rashly nor rigidly, much lesse falsely, for if you do you shall be judged righteously (indeed) as to your case, but not comfortably as to your condition. They who will not chuse Judgement, doe, in the issue, chuse Judgement, that is, not using deliberation in Judgement, they draw deservedly upon themselves a judgement of condemnation.

Secondly, Taking it more generally, *Let us chuse to our selves Judgement, or that which is right.*

Note.

It is not enough for us to doe Judgement, or that which is right, but we must chuse it.

'Tis a worke of no acceptation with God to doe that which is just, unlesse we chuse it as wel as doe it, that is, unlesse our hearts close with it, and pitch upon it. *Solomon* (*Prov: 1. 29.*) chargeth the simple for not chusing what was good ; *they did not chuse the feare of the Lord.* By the feare of the Lord, he meanes the true worship of the Lord, or any worke of obedience, by which we testifie a holy feare of him ; possibly they might doe the feare of the Lord ; possibly they worshipped the Lord, they prayed to him, and heard his word, but they did not chuse the feare of the Lord ; they did not sit downe and judge that best, or most necessary, but tooke it up by accident, or by custome, or for company, because they saw others doe it. It will not turne to our account to be found doing good, unlesse we chuse to our selves that which is good. *Our elections are more eyed by God, then our actions, and the setting of our hearts, then the work of our hands.*

Thirdly,

Thirdly, From the latter branch, *Let us know among our ſelves what is good.*

Note.

First, *There's nothing worth our knowing, but that which is good.*

Whatſoever hath a morall, or a ſpirituell good in it, is worthy to be knowne; the truths, the workes, the wayes of God, are the moſt deſireable good things to be ſtudied and knowne (*Pſal. 4. 6.*) *There are many will ſay, who will ſhew us any good?* What's their good? Corne, wine, oyle, gold, ſilver, houſes, lands, &c. theſe are their good, and theſe are all their good; but though a godly man knoweth that theſe are good things, and bleſſeth God for any portion in them; yet that which he call's *his good, and the good*, is of a higher nature; We commonly call worldly things *our goods*, but we miſ-call them if we call them *our good*. The Favour of God is our good, grace is our good, faith and love and hope and righteouſneſſe are good above all, God himſelfe is good, and to know and enjoy him in Chriſt through the Spirit is our chiefeſt good here, and will be all our good hereafter. *Let us know what is good.*

From the Comparative ſenſe of the words, *Let us know what is good*, that is, if there be a better to be had let us know that.

Obſerve.

It is not enough for us to have the knowledge of good things, but among good things the beſt are to be ſought out, to be knowne, and attained to.

This was a ſpeciall branch of the Apoſtles prayer for the Philippians (*Phil. 1. 10.*) *That ye may approve the things that are excellent*; or the things that differ in excellency; Some are contented to ſit downe in the loweſt forme of Chriſts Schoole; if they have but any thing which they may call good, or true, right and ſincere, they looke no further; any thing ſatiſfieth them, which will ſerve turne to keep them from periſhing; they have no holy aſpirings, nor godly covetous deſires after the beſt things, and the beſt of the beſt. God is willing and hath promiſed to give us not only good things, but the beſt things (*Pſal. 81. 16.*) *He ſhould have fed them alſo with the fineſt of the wheat,*
and.

and with honey out of the rock should I have satisfied thee; 'tis a mercy to have wheat, but the finest of the wheat, and honey out of the rock, not ordinary honey, but the best honey, the purest honey, are greater mercies. We, by our sins, deserve that God should (as the Prophet speakes, *Isa: 30. 20.*) give us the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction; that is, either that he should give us adversity in stead of bread, and affliction in stead of water, or that he should feed us with the coursest bread, with huskes and bran, and give us bitter waters, the waters of *Marah* to drinke, yet he in mercy gives us pleasant bread, and wel-tasted water; yea were we better, he would give us the best bread, the finest of the wheat, and our cup should be sweeter to us then the sweetest honey. *The reason why we have not of the best, is because we are no better.* Yea God now gives us not only good things, but the best of good things, even himselfe, his Son and Spirit, who are best of all (O how excellent is this loving kindness!) therefore let us not only look after good things, but the best of good things, to honour God, and lift up his name to the highest in this world; Let us labour to know and doe the best things; and give God our best services and purest praises, even the male of our stocke, the first-borne, the strength of our whole soules. To these highest attainments, *Elihu* perswades those wise and knowing men, promising to joyne with them in that search; Come let us beat out the busines with diligence, that we may at last chuse Judgement, and know among our selves what is good, what is best.

J O B. Chap. 34. Vers. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

For Job hath said, I am righteous : and God hath taken away my Judgement.

Should I lie against my right ? my wound is incurable without transgression.

What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water ?

Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

For he hath said, It profiteth a man nothing, that he should delight himselfe with God.

THe Preface hath been dispatcht ; the context of these five verses contains the whole charge, or bill of complaint, drawne up by *Elihu* against *Job*, consisting of many particulars. This charge is double ; The first part whereof is contained in the 5th and 6th verses ; the second in the 7th 8th and 9th verses. In the first charge he alledgeth foure things against *Job* ; two in the 5th verse, and two in the 6th ; The two things alledged against him in the 5th verse are.

First, That *Job* insisted too much upon his owne righteousness, *Job hath said, I am righteous.*

Secondly, That he reflected too boldly upon the righteousness of God, yea that upon the matter, he had accused God of unrighteousness, or injustice, *God hath taken away my Judgement.*

Vers. 5. *For Job hath said, I am righteous.*

That's the first charge, *Job hath said* ; *Elihu* gathers up, and collects those passages of *Jobs* complaint, which he found most faulty, and layeth them (as we say) in his dish ; *Job hath said* ; we may well remember, and he cannot deny it, for he hath said it, not once only, but often, not lightly, but seriously and asseringly, *I am just, or righteous* ; that is, *I have sufficiently shewed my innocency, and the equity of my cause, but I am not permitted to declare*
and

and hold it forth in such a way as I would, before my Judge; yea the Lord proceedeth with me, not in the ordinary way of Justice, but, being above law, afflicts me, at his pleasure, though I am innocent. This is the summe of what Job said, as often as he hath sayd, *I am righteous*.

The first particule which we render *for*, imports, the cleareness and truth of the charge; there is no avoyding the matter of fact; It will fall upon him, let him take it off and answer it if he can, or as wel as he can. *For Job hath said, I am righteous.*

But it may be questioned, where said he this?


For answer, I shall doe two things.

First, Shew from what passages in Jobs former answers this charge may be made good, or at least made up.

Secondly, I shall shew in what sence Job said this, and how Elihu and Job doe either agree, or differ in the thing.

To the first, where said Job, *I am righteous*?

I answer; We find not this direct assertion in termes, or in so many words, but what he spake in severall places amounts to it; (*Chap: 13. 18.*) Behold, now I have ordered my cause, I know I shall be justified, (*Chap: 23. 10.*) But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tryed me, I shall come forth as gold. (*Chap: 27. 6.*) My righteousnesses I hold fast, and will not let it goe; and he insisted at large upon this poynt, his vindication from all unrighteousness throughout the whole 31th Chapter. There we find him making frequent imprecations (*v. 5, 6, 7.*) If I have walked with vanitie, or if my foot hath hasted to deceit; Let me be weighed in an even ballance, that God may know mine integrity; If my step hath turned out of the way, and mine heart walked after mine eyes, and if any blot hath cleaved to mine hands, then &c. In all which and many other passages of that Chapter, Job spake highly of his owne innocency, and said in effect, *I am righteous*. His other friends had taken notice of this before; Eliphaz hit him with it (*Chap: 4. 17.*) while he put those questions; Shall mortal man be more just then God? shall a man be more pure then his maker? And so did Bildad (*Chap: 8. 6.*) If thou wert pure and upright, surely now he wou'd awake for thee, and make the habitation of thy righteousness prosperous. Nor was Zophar behind with him (*Chap: 11. 4.*) Thou hast sayd; my doctrine is pure, I am cleane in thine eyes.

Vocabulum 
quia certitudinem et firmitatem
asserationem
hic importat
q.d. profecto equidem, verè,
certe Job dixit, Justus sum.
Pined:
Vid: c. 33. 8, 9.
where this
poynt is also
discussed.

Secondly, In what sence did he speak this? For answer, when *Job* said, *I am righteous*, we must consider a two-fold righteousness; First, a perfect absolute righteousness, and that may be two-fold; First, the righteousness of justification, which is an imputed righteousness; Secondly, the righteousness of sanctification, which is an in-wrought or inherent righteousness; this latter is not absolute, or perfect in degree, while we abide in this life, yet it is dayly growing up to perfection, and shall at last attaine a perfect growth. If any say; Why then doth God call us to a perfection of sanctification in this life, if it be not attainable in this life? I answer, he doth it, first, to shew how holy he is; Secondly, to shew how holy we ought to be; Thirdly, he doth it, that we might run to Christ, *who is the Lord our righteousness; and who is made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*: we being altogether short of righteousness, and short in righteousness, may goe to him, and have a compleat and perfect righteousness. Now besides this absolute righteousness of justification, which is attainable here, and of sanctification, which is not attainable here, but shall be hereafter, there is a comparatively perfect righteousness of sanctification, the righteousness of uprightness, and sincerity, when we strive to the uttermost, to please God in all things by doing good, and can say, we doe not please our selves in any way of doing evill.

It should seeme that *Elihu* and *Job* did not wel agree about the definition of justice or righteousness. *Job* intending either civill righteousness towards men, or a righteousness imputed freely by God; but *Elihu* understood him of absolute perfect personall righteousness, which no man attaines unto in this life. For when *Job* is charged with saying, *I am righteous*, he said it either as a justified person, or as a sanctified person. In the former sence, he might say he was perfectly righteous, and in the latter he sayd he was so, as to the sincerity and uprightness of his heart with God, and this he might say of himselfe without fault or blame; for God himselfe had sayd of him (*Ch: 1. 1.*) that he was a man perfect, and upright.

I grant *Job* seemes to say, (though he said it not, with that aime or intention, yet he seemes to say) that he was even absolutely righteous, not only as justified but sanctified, while he said, (*Chap: 31. 7, 8.*) *If there be any blot cleaving to my hands, if my*
steps

Inteligitur justitia per fidem mediatoris spiritus sancti Arrobore confirmata; Neque enim aliam potuit habere Job, qui suam claris verbis amoliretur.

Cogit

steps have gone out of the way, or my heart been deceived, &c. This gave *Elihu* occasion to charge him, with saying, *I am righteous*; he did not charge him with saying so, as justified through the free grace of God, nor did he charge him for saying so as to his sincerity, but he charged him in these two respects.

First, Because he spake so much of the righteousness of his way, and of his workes; for though it were true he was righteous in the sence by him intended, yet because he made it his business, and spent a large discourse to tell the world, how good, how just, and how holy a man he had been, this was more then became him in that condition.

Secondly, *Elihu* checkt him for saying so, because (though he were fully righteous as justified and sincerely righteous as sanctified) he complained of his afflictions, as if God might not lay his hand heavy upon him, no nor touch a righteous person with an afflicting hand; or as if he and all other righteous persons, ought to passe all their dayes in peace, and have an exemption from the crosse. Whereas one great reason why God afflicted him so sorely, was to make it knowne to all the world in his example, that meerey upon his owne prerogative and soveraignty, he both may and will when he pleaseth, afflict the most innocent person in the world. Yea, the intent of *Elihu* in urging and burdening *Job* with those sayings, was to convince him, that though he was a childe of God, and had walked before him in righteousness and true holiness, yet he ought to humble himselfe and beare with meekness and patience the sorest visitations of God. And that therefore he should not have pleaded his owne integrity, to priviledge him from affliction, nor have sayd, *Why doe I suffer, seeing I am righteous?*

Hence note.

First, That, as it is altogether sinfull for any man to say, *I am altogether without sin*; (for 1 John 1. 8.) If we say we have no sin, there is no truth in us; and he who saith (in that sence) *I am righteous*, doth but declare his owne unrighteousness) so to speake much of our owne righteousness and goodness (though we are both good and righteous) is evill and very blameable. For whereas *Job* said, *I am righteous*, he should rather have left others to say it, he should have been satisfied that he was so without saying so; and though it cannot be denied that *Job* was extreemly urged to

it

it (as hath been ſhewed more then once in opening this Booke) and it had been but neceſſary for him to ſay it once or twice in his owne defence, yet becauſe he ſayd it ſo often, it drew, and that deſervedly, this cenſure or charge upon him.

Hence take this corollary or inference.

If to ſpeake much of our owne righteouſneſs be diſpleaſing, then how abominable is it to be proud of it or truſt upon it ?

There is nothing more pleaſing to God, then to ſee man walking in wayes of righteouſneſs, nor is there any thing more diſpleaſing unto God, then to ſee a man liſted up with or leaning upon his owne righteouſneſs. If we make our owne righteouſneſs our ſtaffe, God will make it our rod. And though he is farre from ſcourging us becauſe we are righteous, yet he will correct us if we proclaime our owne righteouſneſs, yea if we thinke it much, or thinke much of it. We muſt have a very great occaſion when at any time we beare witneſs to our owne righteouſneſs; and goodneſs; but if the heart be liſted up in pride, or truſt, at all, upon it, this renders man odious in the ſight of God. God ſaved *Noah* out of that common deluge, in which the old world periſhed; *For* (ſaith the Lord, *Gen: 7. 1.) thee have I ſeene righteous before me in this generation. Noah* was righteous before God, and was ſaved when others periſhed; but ſurely had he vainely boated or unnecceſſarily voted himſelfe righteous before men, he had periſhed as wel as others. It comes much to one and the ſame account with God, whether men be openly unrighteous, or whether (without a juſt cauſe and call) they open their righteouſneſs before men.

Secondly, Note.

How righteous ſoever we are in life, yea though we are righteous by faith, (which is our righteouſneſs unto life) yet we muſt not plead that for our freedome from afflictions.

We may plead the righteouſneſs of faith againſt condemnation, but not againſt correction; if any man be in Chriſt, he ſhall never be condemned; but though a man be in Chriſt, and juſtified by the higheſt actings of faith in the blood of the Covenant, yet he may be ſeverely corrected. This was (I conceive) the principall ſcope and intent of *Elihu* in charging *Job* thus, even to convince

vince him, that though he was a faithfull servant of God, and of a very unstained conversation among men, yet he must not thinke himselfe above the crosse, but quietly and meekly submit to it. *Job* spake sometimes fully to that poynt, *He destroyeth the righteous and the wicked, if the scourge slay suddenly, he laugheth at the tryall of the innocent* (Chap. 9. 23.) yet at other times he forgot himselfe; and therefore he was (justly as to his present case, and profitably as to the future issue) remembred of it by this plaine and home-dealer *Elihu*. *Job hath said I am righteous,*

And God hath taken away my Judgement.

As if he had sayd, Once thou didst say, *God destroyeth the perfect and the wicked*, but now thou seemest to say, thou art greatly wrong'd, and thy Judgement quite taken away, because being a righteous man thou art thus afflicted.

Mr Broughton renders, *But the Omnipotent keeps back my right.* As Judgement is right fully given, so there is but little difference between keeping back our right, and taking it away; therefore the word signifieth not only to take away, or cause to decline, to divert and subvert, but to keep back or withhold any thing in any kind, as Mr Broughton translates expressely. This is the thing (saith *Elihu*) which *Job* hath said, *God hath taken away or kept back my Judgement.* סור est auferre declinare, divertere subvertere.

But where did *Job* say this? he said it (Chap. 27. 2.) *As the Lord liveth, who hath taken away my Judgement, and the Almighty who hath vexed my soule. Bildad charged Job with it* (Chap. 8. 3.) while he put this question to him, *Doth God pervert Judgement? or the Almighty pervert Justice?* Implying that *Job* had spoken words reflecting upon the Justice and Judgement of God, in taking away his Judgement.

But you will say, What is Judgement? and what is it to take away Judgement? or how is a mans Judgement taken away?

I answer; There is a three-fold notion of Judgement in Scripture.

First, Judgement is the result or issue of a mans reason about any matter or question propounded to him. God sometimes takes away mans Judgement in that sense, and then he becomes a foole, and unable to judge. 'Tis a dreadfull judgement when God thus takes away mans judgement; and gives him up to a *Reprobate* (or

(or an unjudicious) *minde*, as he did the old Gentiles (*Rom: 1. 28.*) for then he will quickly doe those things *which are not convenient*; not being able to distinguish nor discern between true or false; he must needs put light for darkness, bitter for sweet, sweet for bitter; *Elihu* doth not represent *Job* complaining that God had taken away his judgement in this notion.

Secondly, Judgement is any angry dispensation or wrath powred out or executed upon persons, nations, or Churches; *If judgement begin at the house of God*, (that is, if trouble or wrath begin at the Church of God) *what will the end of these be that obey not the Gospel?* (*1 Pet: 4. 17.*) *Dauids Song* consisted of two parts (*Psal: 101. 1.*) judgement was one of them, *I will sing of mercy and judgement*. This notion of judgement is every where found in Scripture, yet neither is this the notion of it in this Scripture. God had not thus taken away *Jobs* judgement; he begg'd indeed that God would take away this his judgement, and it was the matter of his complaint, because he did not take it away.

× Thirdly, Judgement is right done or right due; right due, is judgement due; right done, is judgement done. Thus *David* prayed (*Psal: 72. 1.*) *Give the King thy Judgements O God, and thy righteousness to the Kings son*; that is, give him an understanding to doe right, or to give every man his right. To doe this is a thing so desireable in all men, especially in Kings and Princes, that when God at *Gibeon* sent young king *Solomon* a blanke from heaven, and bid him aske what he would, he asked only this (*1 Kings 3. 9.*) *Give thy servant an understanding heart, to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad*. This is properly the judgement intended here. *Job* complained, *God hath taken away my Judgement*; that is, my right, or hath not done me right.

But how is Judgement taken away?

I shall answer it in three things.

First, When right is quite subverted, and over-throwne. This the Prophet elegantly expresseth and reproveth (*Amos 6. 12.*) *Ye have turned judgement into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into Hemlock*. Right done is sweere and wholesome, but right denied is bitter as Gall, and banefull like Hemlock.

Secondly, When Judgement is defer'd, stopped, or delayed,
then

then 'tis taken away for a time. To have judgement long delayed, is alwayes next degree to the deniall of it, and sometimes delay is more cruciating and grievous then a deniall.

Thirdly, A mans judgement is sayd to be taken away, when the ground, or cause, of Gods proceeding with him in judgement, is hid, or unmanifest; Judgement, as to us, is not, when the reason of it doth not appeare to us, or when we see not the reason of it. To feel Judgement and not to see the cause of it, turnes it into a torment; we say commonly, *Things that appeare not, are as if they were not*. When the reason or ground of our sufferings is not understood, 'tis as if we suffered without any ground of reason.

When *Job* complained, *God hath taken away my Judgement*, we are not to understand him, as if *Elihu* intended it in the first or grossest sence, that God had subverted his judgement, or had done him wrong. *Elihu* could not suspect he had any such blasphemous opinion of God; for, that had fullfilled the Devills prophecy of him; *He will curse thee to thy face*. But when he sayd, *God hath taken away my Judgement*; he meant it according to the two latter interpretations, either that God deferred long to restore him, and answer his prayer, or that God had hid from him the reason of his dealing with him, so that he could not make it out, how, or why he was so sorely and grievously handled. *Job* knew well his owne innocency, but he did not well consider Gods soveraignty, which alone answers enough for him, how much soever he in this world afflicts the innocent. And therefore for as much as God held him long in that sad condition, and in the meane time hid his judgement, or the reason of it from him, this was *Jobs* grievance, and the burden of it pressed him to cry out, *God hath taken away my Judgement*. In this he was too bold with God, and therefore he justly fell under this censure of *Elihu*: As if he had sayd, It doth not at all become thee, O *Job*, as a creature, as a man, much lesse as a new creature, or as a godly man, to cry out (as thou hast done) that God hath taken away thy Judgement; because he doth not give thee an account, nor tell thee, why he judgeth thee; therefore humble thy selfe that ever thou hast sayd (and take heed thou say it no more) *God hath taken away my Judgement*.

Hence note.

First,

First, *God sometimes lets the goodness of his most precious servants lie in the dark.*

He goeth unusuall wayes with many of his choycest servants ; he doth not alwayes declare their right, nor deale with them according to the ordinary rule, in giving good to them that are good, (as not alwayes evill to them that are evill, the Lord is at his liberty in these present distributions, he is supream, and hath power over all flesh) and so keeps their judgement in the clouds, or a secret to himselfe.

Secondly, Note.

The Lord sometimes is pleased to defer. and delay to doe his servants right.

And thus he takes away their Judgement. Though he hath a purpose to give it them ; yet he doth not presently give it them ; at last he will make even with all men, each man shall have his judgement ; he will reward every one according to his worke, and the righteous, shall (without doubt) have a good reward.

Thirdly, Note.

When God doth either hide or defer the Judgement of a godly man, it doth very much affect, yea and afflict his heart.

We are usually much afflicted with any dark dispensation upon many accounts, especially upon this, because it makes us obnoxious to every mans censure. When God takes away our judgement, we fall under the hard judgements of men ; And to lie under the ill opinions of men unvindicated or unrighted, is no easie burden. We have that promise (*Psal: 39. 6.*) *He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgement as the noone-day.* The righteousness and judgement of a good man may be in a mid-night darkness as to man ; and till that be brought to the light of other mens knowledge, himselfe hath, sometimes, little light of comfort.

Fourthly, Note.

It is sinfull to complaine, and to be troubled, as if God had not done us right, because we see it not done, or because he deferrs to doe it.

In this *Job* was most faulty, he uttered many passionate speeches about what God had done, because things were not brought to an issue, nor his condition stated and cleared up, either to the world, or to himselfe; This troubled him more then the extremity of his paine, or the greatest of his troubles. How stiffely *Job* stood upon it, that his Judgement was taken away, will appeare yet further in the next words, which *Elihu* makes further matter of accusation.

Vers. 6. *Should I lie against my right? my wound is incurable without transgression.*

In this verse we have two other parts of the Inditement brought against *Job*, neere of the same nature with the former; wherein he yet more vehemently urgeth his owne integrity, and cryeth out both of the greatness and causelesness (on his part) of his present sufferings. More distinctly *Elihu* in this verse chargeth him.

First, That he did over-eagerly maintaine his owne cause, *Should I lie against my right?*

Secondly, That he spake of God as dealing over-harshly with him; *My wound is incurable without transgression*; These things (saith *Elihu*) thou hast also sayd.

Should I lie against my right?

We read the words as a Question; others read them as a direct proposition; *There is a lie in Judging me*, or, *There is a lie against my right*; The word which we here translate *right*, is the same which we translate *Judgement* in the former verse. And when he saith, *There is a lie against my right*; It is as if he had plainly sayd, *I am falsely charged, I am wrongfully accused, I am not such a man as I am supposed, nor have I done those things whereof I am suspected*. Every false accusation brought against a man, is a lie against his right.

Secondly, Others read it thus, *I shall make liars against my right*; that is, whosoever stands up to prove any thing against me, as you have done, saying, *I am wicked, unrighteous, or hypocritical, I shall be able to prove him a liar*. But neither the Grammaticall signification of the words will fairely beare this sence, nor doth it well correspond with the former verse.

X x x

Thirdly, *Cajet: Item Chald:*

In judicando enim me mendacium est.
Vulg:

Super judicium meum faciam mentiri. i. e. falsi arguam hominem qui volet mecum contendere.

*In iudicio meo
mentior. Pisc.
Probarem si
mentiri hoc
sensu de personâ
dici invenire-
tur nam de re
asirpari cer-
tum est.
Drus.*

Thirdly, Thus; *I lie in my Judgement*; that is, I am deceived in it, or I sayle of it. To lie in Scripture, is to faile, or to frustrate the hope of another. Some insist much upon this sence; as if he had sayd, *I come short of that which I looked for as my right or Judgement*; in this sence the word is often applyed to things, but not to persons, as some of the learned conclude upon this place. (*Isa: 58. 11.*) *Thou shalt be like a spring of water, whose waters sayle not*; we put in the margin, *lie not, or deceive not.* 'Tis a promise made to those who keepe a true fast, and keepe it truely, God will be to them as a spring whose waters lie not. All our fresh springs are or should be in God, and he is a spring whose waters are always fresh. No man ever came to him for matter, and was frustrated of his expectation. Thus also the word is used (*Hab: 3. 17.*) *Although the labour of the Olive shall sayle*; that is, though when you come to the Olive tree, you find no Olives there, nor see any hope of a drop of oyle in your whole Olive-yard, yet you may still rejoyce in the Lord, he is able to annoynt and fill you alwayes with the oyle of gladness. Thus Job is conceived complaining here of his deceived hopes, much in that sence as God himselfe in the Prophet (*Isa: 5. 7.*) is sayd to be deceived. *He looked for judgement, but behold oppression, for righteousness, but behold a cry. I (saith Job) looked for better things, I looked for light, but behold darkness, I looked to be acquitted, but behold I am hardly thought of and censured on every hand, I am quite disappointed, matters fall out and are otherwise then I did expect.*

*In iure meo
mentior. i. e.
quum innocen-
tiam meam de-
fendo. putor
mentiri. Pisc.*

Fourthly, *I lie in my right*; is thus expounded, *I am thought to lie, while I maintaine my right, or say I am righteous; I am judged a liar, for saying I have walked in the truth.*

All these readings of the text are given from the affirmative translation.

But we, as also severall others translate by an interrogation, intimating the heate and earnestness of his spirit, in wiping off this aspersions; *Should I lie against my right? I should not, I will not.* As if Elisha had sayd; *Job hath insisted so much upon his owne righteousness, and right, that he will not be taken off from it upon any termes, nay he hath said, what? should I knowing my selfe to be innocent (because of this cry against me) cry guilty to this indite-ment; and so betray my owne innocency, or give away my right?*

Job

Job stands so much upon his owne righteousness, that if he should but acknowledge himselfe faulty, he thinkes he should lie, or wrong himselfe by speaking against his knowledge and conscience. And indeed Job (Chap: 27. 4, 5, 6.) spake fully to this effect, That it would be a wrong to or a lie against himselfe, if he should not stand up to the uttermost in his owne right, and defend his innocency; and 'tis probable Elihu hits at that passage, while he chargeth him with this passionate expostulation, What! Should I lie against my right? Would you have me say as you say, and so beare false witness, or be a false witness against my selfe? What ever comes of it, I will not doe that. I will not lie against my right, nor let goe my integrity; I will not in civility to any other mans understanding of me, subscribe to my owne wrong, or say I am, what I am not, or have done what I have not. Elihu brings this as a strong proove of the height of Jobs spirit, as if to confesse his fault were to fall below himselfe, yea to belie himselfe; Should I lie against my right?

*An par est ut
mantiar super
innocentia
mea? Vatabl:*

Hence note.

First, *To acknowledge we have done that, which we have not done, or that we are what we are not, is to lie against our owne right, or to wrong our selves.*

As many lie, by speaking more good of themselves then is true, or by denying that evill which in truth they are guilty of; so he that submits to that guilt which he is free from, or confesseth more evill of himselfe then is true, lieth against his owne soule. So did that *Amalekite* (2 Sam: 1. 10. compared with 2 Sam: 3 1. 4.) charge himselfe falsely with killing *Saul* in hope of a reward from *David* for his good newes. As no man ought to lie against another, much lesse against himselfe; And as that man doth wickedly belie himselfe, who saith he is better then he is, (for that's horrible hypocrisie; all such God will unmask one time or other, who thus cover themselves with lyes, and say (like those in the Prophet) they have dreamed when they have seene nothing, but the vaine phantasies of their own braines, nor felt any thing but the presumption of their false hearts; Now (I say) as he doth wickedly bely himselfe who saith he is better then he is) so for any man to deny that good which God hath done for him, or wrought in him, or what he hath done or wrought in the feare and power

of God, is a dangerous way of denying and belying his owne right.

Hence ſecondly note.

No man ought to admit any charge againſt himſelfe, wherein he is not guilty.

It is not in our liberty to give up our owne integrity, we may not give up the righteouſneſs and innocency of others to a falſe witneſs, if we can detect it, much leſſe our owne. Let no man lie againſt his right. It is our affliction only to be wronged by others, but 'tis our ſin to wrong either others, or our ſelves. Yet.

Thirdly, Note.

We may quickly over-aſt in ſtanding upon our own right.

That caution of *Solomon* (*Eccle. 7. 16.*) ſeemes to carry this obſervation in it. *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe: Why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelfe.* Some expound this precept as a rule of policy, adviſing all to a moderation in the praſtiſe of (that wherein there can be, indeed, no exceſſe) true piety and religion; as if it were a duty to ſtudy and comport our ſelves to a kind of neutrality and indifferency in the things of God, leſt we expoſe our ſelves to the wrath and rage of men, who cannot beare it with patience to ſee any that are better or do better then themſelves. But I conceive the Spirit of God in *Solomon*, was farre from breathing any ſuch cold blaſt, to nip either the buddings or higheſt growths of godlineſſe; and that he would not at all abate any in the praſtiſe of holineſſe, but intends one of or all theſe three things. Firſt, to take men off from any opinionativenesse, about what they judge to be righteous and themſelves righteous in doing it, willing them to take advice, and not to lean to their own underſtanding, nor to reſt in their own dictates as infallible; or Secondly, when he ſaith, *Be not righteous overmuch*, his meaning is, doe not exact the utmoſt of others which the Law in the rigour of it will allow; he that will not remit any thing of his right, is not only over-righteous, but may ſoon doe wrong; or Thirdly, when he ſaith, *be not over-righteous*, as he would not have men ſtand ſtrictly upon their right with others, ſo he would not have them ſpeak much of their own righteouſneſſe; but rather ſometimes take blame to themſelves, then (which was *Jobs* caſe)

pro-

proclaime themselves altogether blamelesse. As we are not to betray our innocency, so not give a shadow of any boasting in it. We seldome lose by saying little of our selves. And in most cases we should rather trust God (who hath promised he will doe it, *Psal. 37. 6.*) to bring forth our righteousness as the light, then be over-industrious in bringing it to light, or in bringing it out of that darknesse with which it lyeth obscured, either by or among men. As we ought never to lye against our right, so it may not be convenient at some times to speake all the truth of it which we can. This at least was *Jobs* fault, and it will be any mans who doth like *Job*, yea though he should be (which few have been or are like to be) under as great sufferings as *Job*. The greatnesse whereof he aggravated to the hight in the next words, with which *Elihu* chargeth him.

My wound is incurable without transgression.

An incurable wound is the worst of wounds, and though to be wounded without transgression is best for him that receives it, yet it is worst for him that gives it. *My wound is incurable.*

The Hebrew is, *my arrow*; the arrow is a wounding weapon, and in this Text 'tis put for the wound it self. *Job* complained (*Chap. 6. 4.*) *The arrows of the Almighty drink up my spirits*; There are arrows of two sorts, and answerably there are wounds of two sorts. There are first externall, secondly, internall arrows; God shooteth his arrows both into the flesh, and spirit: the former make a wounded body, the latter a wounded soule. *Job* may intend both; for he received wounds in both; his flesh was wounded, and all that belong'd to flesh, his estate, his credit and good name were wounded, his soule and spirit were wounded also, the arrowes of God were shot thick at him, and hit him from head to foot. *The Archers* (as dying *Jacob* said of *Joseph*, *Gen. 49. 23*, *Gravissima est* 24.) *so sorely grieved him, they [all] shot at him, and (one of them sagitta mea abs-* Satan) *hated him; but though his bow (as to the maine) abode que transgressi-* in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands one. Bez: of the mighty God of *Jacob*; yet he cryed out as if there had been no helpe, no healing, no hope for him. *My wound*

Is incurable.

The word which we render *incurable*, signifies not only what is
very

*Hanc sagittam
Elihu vocat
vuln i.e. gra-*

*venem doloratam
pessime habentem
hinc Enosh
homo ab infirmitate
et fragilitate dictus.*

very dolorous, or grievous, but mischievous, mortall, and deadly. And from this word man is called *Enosh* in the Hebrew, to shew how infirme and fraile he is, sin having given him a wound which is incurable, by any thing but the blood of Jesus Christ. *Job* felt his wounds, and he spake of them, as a man swallowed up with desperation, and expected no cure of his present sad condition; *My wound is incurable*, and he concluded with that which is yet harder, *My wound is incurable*

Without transgression.

Mr. Broughton translates, *My stroke is sore without trespassse.* *Job* in saying his wound was incurable, shewed a defect in his faith, but in saying it was incurable without transgression, he seemeth to shew his defect in truth. For surely had there not been transgression in him, there had never been a wound upon him; God had never so much as broken our skin but for sin; Man had never felt so much as the scratch of a pins point by the hand of God, if he had not once prevaricated and Apostatiz'd from God. We owe all our sorrows to our sins, all our woundings to our transgressings. How then doth *Job* say, *My wound is incurable without transgression*? The word here used is not usually put to signifie sin in generall (though some take it so) but some speciall kind of sin, & that of more then an ordinary degree, a sin with a malignity, a provoking sin; As if the meaning of *Elihu* were, that he heard *Job* say, Though his sin were not great, though it were not any rebellion against light, nor dangerous Apostacy, though his were a very curable sin, yet his wound was altogether incurable, his wound was great, though his sin was little. Now, because Justice doth usually apportion the punishment inflicted both to the nature and measure of the sin committed, therefore *Elihu* takes it (and he had too much occasion to doe so) as a great reflection upon the justice of God, when he heard *Job* thus bemoaning himselfe, *My wound is incurable without transgression*. To receive the least wound without transgression, is a great wound to justice, how greatly then doth he wound the Justice of God, who saith he, hath received a great, yea an incurable wound without transgression.

But where spake *Job* these words, when said he, *My wound is incurable without transgression*, (we must bring in that, *Job* hath said,

UVD denotat
grave scelus
vel Apostasiam.
Sculpt.

said, to every one of these charges) I answer, *Job* spake of the arrows of God (*Chap: 6. 4.)* and that they were incurable, he saith in other words (*Chap: 16. 13.)* *His arrowes compasse me round about ; he cleaveth my reins asunder ; he powreth out my gall upon the ground.* When a mans reins are cleft in sunder with an arrow, and his gall powred on the ground, his wound is incurable.

But where did he say, *My wound is incurable without transgression ; Elihu* might collect that from (*Chap: 9. 17.)* *He breaketh me with a tempest, and multiplyeth my wounds without cause ;* and from (*Chap: 16. 16, 17.)* *My face is foule with weeping, &c. not for any injustice in my hands.* While *Mary* washed the feete of *Christ* with her teares (*Luke 7. 38.)* she might be sayd to foule her owne face with her teares. Teares, which (in a qualified sence, or as a token of true repentance) wash and cleanse the soule, doe yet blubber and disfigure the face. *My face* (saith *Job*) is foule with weeping, though my hands are not foule with sinning, or any evill doing. This was, in effect to say what *Elihu* here censureth him for saying, *My wound is incurable without transgression.*

Hence note.

First, *God hath his arrows, he can wound us when and where he pleaseth.*

He shooteth and misseth not his marke. He hath a quiver full of deadly arrows ; take heed how ye provoke him. *Job* had a whole quiver of arrows emptied upon him for triall, for the exercise of his patience. Woe to those upon whom God emptieth his quivers in vengeance. (*Psal: 7. 11, 12, 13.)* *God is angry with the wicked every day ; if he turne not, he will whet his sword, he hath bent his bow, and made it ready ; he hath also prepared for him the instruments of death, he ordaineth his arrows against the persecutors.*

Secondly, Note.

The wounds which God makes cannot be healed by any medicines but his owne.

Jobs wound was incurable, there was no balme for him in the *Gilead* of this world, no *Physician* there. And therefore the Lord bids

bids *Egypt*, in ſcorne, ſeeke healing there (*Jer: 46. 11.*) *Goe up into Gilead and take balme*, O virgin, the daughter of *Egypt*: in vaine ſhalt thou uſe many medicines, for thou ſhalt not be cured. Who can heale where God will wound? (*Pſal: 38. 2, 3.*) *Thine arrows ſtick faſt in me*, there is no ſoundneſſe in my fleſh; even *David* complained that the wounds which the arrows of God had made in him were incurable. *Why is my paine perpetuall* (ſaid the Prophet, *Jer: 15. 18.*) *and my wound incurable, which refuseth to be healed?* When *Ephraim* ſaw his ſickneſſe, and *Judah* ſaw his wound, then went *Ephraim* to the *Aſſyrian*, and ſent to king *Jareb* to help him, yet could he not heale you, nor cure you of your wounds. (*Hof: 5. 13.*) God gives ſtates or bodies politick ſuch wounds, as all the medicines and meanes in the world cannot helpe; They may goe to the *Aſſyrian*, and ſend to king *Jareb*, to this and that power; They may call a whole collidge of State-Phyſicians or deepeſt politicians for counſel and adviſe, yet neither one nor other can be a healer to them. Therefore in the next Chapter (*v. 1.*) the Church concluded upon another courſe, and a better addreſſe, then either to the *Aſſyrian*, or to king *Jareb*. *Come let us returne unto the Lord*, for he hath torne, and he will heale us; only the Lord who gives the wound can heale the wound; the ſame hand which ſmites us muſt cure us, elſe our wound is incurable.

Thirdly, Note.

To complaine of our wounds as incurable, or paſt cure, is an argument of our unbeliefe.

'Tis good for us even to deſpaire of help from creatures, and to ſay the leaſt wound (if but the ſcratch of a pin) is incurable by all the art, meanes, and medicines which this world can adminiſter, but to ſay our wound (though never ſo deep, dangerous, and deadly) is abſolutely incurable, is our ſin. While we ruine our ſelves (that is, while we provoke God to ruine us, yet) there is hope in God; O *Iſrael*, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelfe, but in me is thine helpe (*Hof: 13. 9.*) deſpaire as much as you will of creatures helpe, but ſtill hope in God.

Thirdly, In that he ſaith, *My wound is incurable without transgreſſion.*

Note.

The

The Lord may, and doth take liberty to afflict those grievously, who have not sinned greatly.

There is no man liveth and sinneth not, yet every man is not (in strict sense) a sinner, that is, a great sinner, a rebell, a worker of iniquity; yet the Lord when 'tis needfull giveth them great wounds, who have not (comparatively) sinned greatly. Though no sin should be little in our eye, yet there are degrees of sin, and some are lesse then others in the eye both of God and man. *Elihu* chargeth *Job*, not as saying he had no sin, but because he complained his wounds were great, though his sins were not; or that there was not a due proportion between his offence and his punishment, his sins and his sufferings.

Hence note, Fourthly.

Though the Lord taketh liberty to afflict those greatly that have not sinned greatly, yet they must not take liberty to complaine of the greatness of their afflictions, how little sever their sins have been.

A gracious heart lookes upon the least of his mercies, as greater then the greatest of his good deservings, and upon the greatest of his sufferings, as lesse then the least of his ill deservings or demerits. And surely (besides that liberty which God hath, as he is supream, and soveraigne, to afflict whom he will, and in what degree he will) we must know, that, the least sin deserves the greatest wound. An evill thought deserves all the evill that can be heaped upon us. Whatsoever we suffer on this side hell is less then the least of our sins. And therefore if we have reason to confesse our little sins great, and our greatest wounds little, compared with our little sins; how much more should we confesse our great sufferings little, compared with our great sins, as the Church did (*Ezra* 9. 13.) *After all that is come upon us (our long and hard bondage in Babylon) for our evill deeds, and for our great trespasses, thou O Lord, hast punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve.*

Further, from the whole verse, in that *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with these severall sayings.

Observe, First.

A good mans sayings are often worse then his meanings.

Y y y

Elihu

Elihu rebuketh his speeches, not his spirits; his words though in some respect true, yet were dangerous, and because not well explained by himselfe, scandalous to others; But his heart was not treacherous, nor the bent of his mind wrong set, in uttering them; Evill men may speake good words, but 'tis with a bad heart; Good men sometimes speake bad and offensive words, yet with honest hearts; and when their mindes are serene, and they cleared from those clouds of perturbation, which have darkned them, they (as *Job*) are ready to recant them, and repent of them.

Secondly, Note.

It is an high offence to intimate any thing which doth in the least intrench upon the Justice, and righteousness of God.

To say, God hath taken away our judgement, may call downe judgements; To say, we are wounded without transgression, is a great transgression; and the reason, why it is so, is plaine, because such sayings, tell the world, that we suffer, if not quite without desert, yet more then we deserve; and what is this but to justifie our selves, and lay blame upon God, then which (as was shewed at the 2d verse of the 3d Chapter) nothing is more derogatory to God, or more blame-worthy in man.

Thirdly, Note.

If we speak amisse, or indiscreetly about the dealings of God with us, we may thank our selves if we are hardly censured, and soundly chidden for it.

Though *Jobs* heart was honest, yet his tongue was intemperate, and he too bold with God; and you see how God stir'd up the spirit of *Elihu* to lay it home to him, and bring him upon his knees for it. They who vent unwarrantable speeches, must not thinke much if they meet with sharpe reproofes and cutting censures. Tongue-faults seldome escape without tongue-lashes; And 'tis a mercy to meete with them from a faithfull friend; Their lashing and cutting tongues prove healing tongues, (*Psal.* 141. 5.)

Fourthly, Note.

Every speaker is at the mercy of his hearers.

No man knows what glosse his words may have put upon them
when

when once uttered. Here are foure sayings brought against *Job*, yet *Job* never spoke any of them expressely, or in so many words, but such collections were made (indeed they were, as not false, so not favourable collections) from what he had spoken. And he had but a poore remedy left, to say he did not meane them so. Take heed what you speak, words are usually judged as others understand them, not as you mean them. Indeed charity doth always incline to the best construction; and will not interpret that ill, which may beare a better interpretation. But who knoweth whether his words shall alwayes meete with a charitable interpreter, our words doe not often meete with just and equall ones. Nothing, indeed, is more common with uncourteous hearers, then to misconster those they heare, or to judge of what is spoken rather as it may be taken to the speakers hurt and defamation, then their owne profit or instruction. And therefore though I would advise every hearer to use as much charity as may be; yet I would also advise every speaker to leave as little as may be to the charity of his hearers.

Thus much of the first part of the charge in these foure sayings. In the three verses following, *Eliphaz* prosecutes the charge, and standeth in admiration, as here at the sayings of *Job*; so there of his doings.

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 7, 8, 9.

What man is like Job, who drinketh up ſcorniſh like water?

which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.

For he hath ſayd, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.

THeſe three verſes containe the ſecond charge or accuſation, which *Elihu* had drawne up againſt *Job*. And in it we may diſtinctly conſider ; Firſt, the forme of it ; Secondly, the matter of it.

The forme of it is by way of queſtion; *What man is like Job?* The matter of it conſiſts of three heads.

Firſt, That he was a man of a ſcornfull ſpirit towards others, or that he had ſubjected himſelfe to the ſcorne of others ; *What man is like Job, which drinketh up ſcorniſh like water?*

Secondly, *Elihu* chargeth him, as having fellowſhip with men of a vaine and offenſive converſation (v. 8th) *which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*

Thirdly, He chargeth him (which is indeed the ground of the former) That he was a man, not only of unſound, but of blaſphemous principles and opinions (v. 9th) *For he hath ſayd, it profiteth a man nothing that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.* This 9th verſe is the prooſe of the eighth ; For ſome might enquire, How doth it appeare, that, *Job goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men?* *Elihu* answers, It appeareth by his words, or from his owne mouth ; *For he hath ſayd, it profiteth a man nothing, that he ſhould delight himſelfe with God.* And if a man once judge that there is no profit in the wayes of God, he thereby declares his conſent to the wayes of the wicked. That's the ſumme of the charge, and theſe the parts of it.

לִכְבֹּד non pro
quolibet homi-
ne ſumitur ſed
pro claro &
ſapiente.

Verſ. 7. *What man is like Job?*

The word rendred *man*, doth not ſignifie every ordinary man, but a great or wiſe man, a famous or a powerfull man. What great

OR

or wise man is like *Job*? Possibly some may be found among the dreggs of the people or among the common sort like himselfe, but among men of honour and reputation for wisdom, surely, there are none to be found like him. Yet some take it (out of the strictness of the original word) for a man of the lowest or meanest condition; What man is like *Job*? that is, no man, no not of the meanest degree is like him. And so the question may be carried under a threefold notion.

First, As a vilifying question, *What man is like Job*? Who is there that hath but the name and face of a man that would doe or speak things as he? *Job*, in this matter, is worse then any man, then the worst of men. He acts and speaks at a lower rate of prudence and piety then many, if not then any of the lowest among the sons of men.

Secondly, We may look upon it as an angry passionate question, a question carrying in it highest indignation; *What man is like Job*? who so vaine, rash, foolish and inconsiderate as he? I have scarce the patience to speake or think of him.

Thirdly, We may take it as an admiring question; *What man is like Job*? It is a thing unheard of, even a stupendious prodigie, that a man should be or doe as *Job*. All sorts of men abstaine from or decline, yea scorne scorning ('tis a thing so unbecoming man) but chiefly they that are great, noble and honourable, such as *Job* hath been in his time, yet he is turned scorner. As if he had sayd, Who hath heard the like? was there ever such a man heard of, who either used such scornfull language against others, or layd himselfe so open to the scorne and contempt of others! *What man is like Job*,

Who drinketh up scorning like water?

That's matter of admiration; *Elihu* might have found out many other matters, wherein *Job* had no fellow, no parallel, scarce any like him in the world; who so afflicted, so humbled, so broken, so deserted by his owne relations, so vexed with friends and comforters like *Job*? But he doth not put the question upon his sufferings, but upon his sin; *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning*, &c. *Drinking* is here used metaphorically, and so likewise are eating, devouring, and swallowing up often used in Scripture, to denote that which is done to be done with much greediness,

ness, and with a kind of delight. And whereas there is a three-fold measure or degree of drinking; First, soberly, or for necessity: Secondly, plentifully or for moderate delight; Thirdly, excessively, or for drunkenness, and the satisfying of a lust. This third seemeth to be here intended, even an excessive drinking of scorn, till he was as a drunken or mad-man with it, or (as we say) mad drunke; For the text saith, *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning.* He doth not only tast it a little, and sip at the scorners cup, but drinks it up to a drop, or to the bottome. *He drinketh up*

scorning.

Quis ita videtur et fannu excipitur ut Job? bibit subfannationem id est subsannatur. Dicitur: Significat Jobbus ad se ridendum omnes provocare cum talibus sermonibus utitur. Merc:

And that's a strange kind of drink, one of the worst if not altogether the worst of Natures brewing. Scorning may be taken two wayes, either passively or actively; some take it in a passive signification; *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water?* that is, who is so scorned, or who subjecteth himselfe to the scorn of men as he hath done. What wise or discreete man did ever lay himself so naked; so open to contempt as he? or who like him would render himselfe so ridiculous, such a laughing stock to all his hearers, who are but ratioll and understanding men? It cannot be denied (nor doth *Elihu* in speaking thus courselly of him deny it) but that *Job*, moved doubtless by the holy Ghost, had spoken many excellent things, full of divine light and learning; yet moved with passion, he spake sometimes much amisse, and is charged for it, as if like a shameless person, he had proffered himselfe, by lavish and intemperate language to the lash of every tongue.

Secondly, Scorning may be taken actively; *What man is like Job, who drinketh scorning like water?* That is, where shall we find such a scorner? who hath uttered so many reproachfull speeches, as *Job*? He drinketh scorning, as if he thought he could never fill himselfe enough with scorning. This interpretation may have a double reference.

First, To his friends, who it seemes, were very sensible that he put scornes upon them. *Zophar* complaineth of it (*Chap. 11. 3.*) *When thou mockest shall no man make thee ashamed;* As if he had sayd, when thou hast mocked and derided us, shall we let thee alone, and say nothing? shall we suffer our selves to be abused and passe it by in silence? ought we not to tell thee of it, and re-
buke

buke thee for it openly, and to thy face, that thou mayest see thy error and be ashamed of it?

Secondly, (which is yet higher, and I judge too high) his scorning is referred by some to the dealings and providences of God, as if he had spoken of them with a kind of scorne, at least with that irreverence, and slightness of spirit, which *Eliphaz* did early and earnestly admonish him of (*Chap. 5. 17.*) *Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord*; and which the Apostle calls *The exhortation, which speaketh unto us as unto children* (*Heb. 12. 5.*) *My son despise not thou the chastening of the Lord*. Thus also *Elihu* may in a qualified sence be understood charging *Job* with *drinking up scorning like water*. As if upon the whole matter he had sayd, *Job hath drunke scorne till he is almost drunken with it, at least, he is so full of it, that he powres it out upon every one that comes neare him, and which is worst of all, he speakes so unbecomingly, that we shall not much wrong him, if we say he hath spoken or acted despiingly (which is a degree of speaking or acting scornefully) concerning the chastenings of God upon him.*

Bibere substantiationem velut aquam est esse plenum sermonibus ridiculis. Vatabl.

Further, When 'tis said, *He drinketh scorning like water.*

It may imply three things; First, the frequency of his scorning, he doth it commonly, he is at scorning as often as at drinking; Secondly, the content which he was supposed to take in scorning, *water* cooleth and refresheth the heated and wearied body: Thirdly, it may note the easiness or naturalness of it to him. To drinke is naturall to man, it puts him to no paines nor study. We say proverbially of that which a man doth without trouble; He doth it as easily as he drinks. But of this word *drinking* and *drinking like water*, the reader may see more upon those words (*Chap. 15. 16.*) *Man drinketh iniquity like water.*

Once more, whereas *Elihu* saith of *Job*, *He drinketh scorning like water.*

Some have made a criticall observation or distinction about it; *Elihu* doth not say, he drinketh scorning like *wine*, but like *water*; They who are provoked or led on to sin by the delight and sweetness which they find in sin, are sayd to drink it *like wine* (*Prov. 4. 17.*) They drink the wine of violence; or they drink violence.

violence like wine. It goeth downe sweetly and pleasantly ; But (say they) such as sin, not out of pleasure but out of will or out of an affected maliciousness, are sayd to *drink iniquity like water*, which hath little pleasure in it, little sweetness or tast in it. There's small savour in water comparatively to wine and other delicate or delicious liquors. So that (according to this notion) they drink iniquity like water, who sin for sins sake. And indeed some are so delighted in sin it self, that they will sin in that which yeilds them no delight. The very act of doing evill is more contentfull to them, then any fruit or consequent of it. But we need not stay in this nicity, the generall sence falls hard enough upon *Job*, to drink scorning like water, is to be much and often in scorning. Water is the cheapest liquor, and of most common use ; every man can goe to the price of that which costs nothing (in most places) but the labour of taking it up. *What man is like Job, that drinketh scorning like water ?*

Taking the words in a passive sence, as *Job* was a person scorned, and drunk in the scornes of men powred upon him, as the earth drinketh in water.

Note.

He behaveth himselfe unlike a man, that layeth himselfe open to, and readily admits the scorne of men.

It is an affliction to be scorned by others ; But it is a sin to render our selves a scorne to others, and not to be sensible of it.

Secondly, (which I rather adhere to) taking the active sence, he is charged with speaking scornfully to his friends, or of the dealings of God with him ; how farre this charge might reach *Job*, hath been toucht a little already ; and will be cleared yet further before the close of the whole matter brought against him in this context. But in the meane time, from the general sence of the words (not concluding *Job* broadly such a one)

Observe.

Scorners are the vilest sort of men.

What man is like *Job*, who drinketh scorning? Not to doe good is sinfull, but either to scorn that which is good or those that are good is farre more sinfull. That man is gone his furthest length, or ascended to the highest step of sin, who turneth scorner, or
gives

gives himselfe a liberty to scorne others. The first words of *David* speake this (*Psal: 1. 1.*) *Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsell of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornfull.* Here are three degrees of sinning; walking, standing, sitting: He that sitteth in the seate of the scornfull, or hath commenced *scorner*, hath taken the highest degree, and is the chiefe Graduate in the Schooles of sin. And as to sit in the seate of the scornfull, is the highest degree of sinning, so they that are got into that seat, care not how long they sit in it, yea, are hardly ever got out of it. So much that chiding question or expostulation of *Solomon* doth fully import (*Prov. 1. 22.*) *Ye scorners, how long will ye delight in scorning?* As if he had sayd, When shall it once be? will ye never have done, nor give over that trade? Scorners are therefore the worst of men, because they deride the best both of things and men (*Prov: 21. 24.*) *Proud and haughty scorner is his name, who dealeth in proud wrath.* Scorners are the children of pride. A proud spirit vents it selfe in scorning. Pride doth not appeare so much in apparrell, in gay clothes and new fangled fashions (all which are often used as flaggs of pride and vanity) nor doth pride appeare so much in praising our selves (though there it appeareth much) as it doth in scorning others. *Proud scorner is his name.* And as the scorner is a proud despiser of others, so a quarrellsome contender with others, and till he is separated from men, there is nothing but separation, no peace among men (*Prov: 22. 10.*) *Cast out the scorner, and contention shall goe out; yea strife and reproach shall cease;* which plainly intimateth, that strife cannot goe out till the scorner be cast out. And therefore *Solomon* (*Pro: 24. 9.*) calleth the scorner an *abomination to man.* Thus the Scripture sets the scorner among sinners of the chiefeest rank and first forme; I may say, he is of the first three, if not the first of that three. Therefore take heed how ye drinke scorning, especially take heed it be not your mornings draught; for as it comes from the heart, so it will fly up into your head, and unfit you for any good worke, at least, that day.

Againe, from the similitude here used, *to drinke up scorning like water*, which (as hath been shewed) holds out the readines and commaturallness of an action unto him that is charged with it.

Note.

The more easily any one sinneeth, the greater is his sin.

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It is best to come hardly off in sinning, and when it goeth hardly downe; Many sin as easily as they eat or drink. *They eat up my people as bread,* (saith God, *Psal: 14. 4.*) that is (as we say) they make no bones of it; there's nothing stickes in their throats, nor troubles their conscience. Where sin lives altogether unmortified in any man (it doth so in every meere naturall or unregenerate man) 'tis no more to him to sin, then it is either to live, or to eate and drink for the maintaining of life. But they shall feelee forest paines for sinning, who have sinned with greatest ease; they shall drinke dammage by scorning like Gall and Wormewood, who have drunke scorning like water. *Elihu* having thus taxed *Job* with scorning at good men, proceeds to tax him with overmuch freedome and familiarity with evill men.

Vers. 8. *Which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*

*Nositur ex
comite &c.*

As if he had sayd, you may know what he is, by the company he keeps.

He goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, or he associates and puts himselfe into the society of the workers of iniquity. *Elihu* doth not say, he dwelleth among the workers of iniquity; The best man in the world may dwell among bad men; *Lot* dwelt in *Sodome*. We must goe out of the world, if we will not be among the wicked; the world is every where full of the workers of iniquity. But (saith he) *he goeth in company with them*. Which intimates the activeness of his spirit with them; yea the election of his spirit, or that he chose their company. Though a good man may be in the company of the wicked, yet he doth not choose their company; He is not of their body of their society or gang. A wicked man doth not content himselfe to be among the ordinary sort of sinners, he is for, and best likes the worst of sinners, workers of iniquity. All are sinners naturally, but some are sinners artificially; they study sin, they contrive and plot mischief; *They devise iniquity upon their beds,* saith one Scripture; *They weave the spiders webb,* saith another. Here's artificiall sinning. The Greekes call such, *sin-workers*, and crafts-men in evill. I have had occasion to speake of these from other passages of this Booke. Here *Elihu* to highten the charge against *Job*, saith, *He goeth in company with* (such

*κακουργοὶ καὶ
τέκτονες κα-
κῶν.*

(such or chooseth such kind of company) *the workers of iniquity;*

And walketh with wicked men.

As our holinesse is exprest by walking with God, so our sinfullnesse by walking with wicked men. To walk with God is all the commendation of *Enoch*, who was so holy on earth that God tooke him up to Heaven, (*Gen. 5. 22.*) *He had this testimony* (saith the Apostle, *Heb. 11. 15.*) *before his translation, that he pleased God. To walk with God, is to please God,* or to give up our selves wholly to God. *Can two walk together except they be agreed?* is the Prophets question, (*Amos 3. 3.*) They who walke together are supposed to have one will, as they are seen to have one way. What God willeth they will, and what God willeth not, they will not who walk with him. To *walk with wicked men.* implyeth an agreement with them, and a conformity to them, as being of their fraternity, company and livery. They that walk with wicked men, declare their familiarity with them; or that their mind and manners are the same. The Apostle tells the *Corinthians* (*1 Cor. 3. 2.*) *Whereas there is among you envying, strife and divisions, are ye not carnall and walk as men*, that is, as men in their naturall and sinfull condition walke. Though ye are spirituall in your state, yet ye act as carnall men. Now, as it is sinfull for a godly man to walke *as a man*, or according to man, (as our Margin hath it, for he should walk *as God*) so it is much more sinfull to walk with wicked men, or according to the worst of men. Thus the Apostle describes the conversation of the *Ephesians* before conversion. (*Eph. 2. 2.*) *And you hath he quickened who were dead in sins and trespasses, in which sometime ye walked according to the course of this World.* That is, according to the tide, current and streame of the times and places wherein ye lived. *Man naturally doth not walk where he ought to goe, but where he seeth the most goe.* *Qua itur non qua eundum.* He is led by the worst of examples (such are the examples of the most or of the many) rather then by the best of rules. It is our duty, and it should be our delight to walk with those who delight in the Law and in the way of God. *David* saith of his deceitfull friend, but reall enemy. (*Psal. 55. 14.*) *We walked unto the house of God in company.* As if he had said, time was when he and I were as if he had been I, both of us but one, in that one thing necessary

cessary, the worship and service of God. It is a good argument, that man hath an heart for God, who walks with good men in the wayes of God. To converse much with or to be much in the company of good men, is a probable signe of goodnesse ; but when we walke with them to the house and worship of God, or converse with them in the duties of holinesse, this is a great (though no infallible) argument of goodnesse. And to be sure to walk with evill men, especially to joyne with them in doing evill is an argument that the man is evill. Therefore *Elihu* may seeme to bring a demonstration against *Jobs* godlinesse (that he intended it not so I shall shew afterwards, but, I say, he seemes to say so) while he saith, *Job walketh with wicked men.*

The Hebrew Phrase used in the Text is more then (as we expresse) *wicked men*, we may render it *men of wickednesse* ; the Scripture calleth those men so who are (as it were) transformed into wickednesse, or formed up of wickednesse. As some men are so witty, that we call them *men of wit*, and others so judicious that we call them *men of judgment*, as some are so skillfull and cunning, that we call them *men of skill and cunning* ; so some are so wicked, that the Scripture calls them *men of wickednesse* ; even with these very dregs of mankind, it seemes *Job* consorted. *He goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.*

But here it may be questioned, was it indeed so with *Job*, or was *Job* such a man as he is expressly charged to be both in this and the former verse ? Did *Elihu* judge him *a scorner, a companion of the workers of iniquity, and a walker with men of wickednesse* ? Doubtlesse, that's not *Elihu's* scope or intention ; nor could he imagine that *Job*, in strict sence, was either a scorner of good men, or chose the company of wicked men. And surely all that knew *Job* could certifie (upon their knowledge) that he was a man of a gracious spirit and unblemisht life ; that he loved good men and sweetly conversed with them, and therefore was farre from closing with deboysh companions, or men of a profligate spirit. Why then doth *Elihu* speak thus ? or spake he the words of truth and sobriety while he spake thus ?

Answer, this forme of speaking doth not alwayes import a likenesse of conversation and disposition, as sometimes it doth, (*Prov.* 1. 11, 15.) *Come with us, and cast in thy lot among us,*

let us all have one purse. *My son, walk not thou in the way with them, refrain thy foot from their path*; that is, doe not hearken to the call of those workers of iniquity. Here in the Text to goe in company with the workers of iniquity, and to walke with wicked men, notes only the doing or speaking that which carryeth some likenesse to them, not a being altogether like them. A man is said to goe and walke with others, when he speaks or doth that which seemes to suite and favour their principles, opinions or practises, though in truth they are the abhorrence of his soul. *Elihu* durst not, could not asserť directly and properly that *Job*, who was a man famous for piety in the dayes of his prosperity, and who in his affliction had not the least degree of ability or opportunity for it, walked with wicked men: But because in the anguish of his soul he spake sometimes intemperately of the dealings of God (which is the guise, spirít, and common language, in such cases, of wicked and ungodly men) therefore he chargeth him as symbolizing or complying with men of wickednesse. So that when *Elihu* saith, *he goeth with wicked men*, he doth not accuse him for keeping bad company in his prosperity; but with speaking hardly of God in his adversity, as ungodly men use to doe, when they are under his hand. He doth not say, you upon such and such a day kept evill company and conversed with men of wickednesse; but you have spoken much like the wicked in the day of your calamity. That this was his scope appeares plainly by the proöfe of this charge, which is also a new charge (*vers. 9.*) *For he hath said, it profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God. Elihu* doth not say, *Job* walketh with wicked men; for we have seen him in their company, and he hath been as vaine and wicked as they. But his proöfe that *Job* walked with the wicked was from his words; *For he hath said it profiteth a man nothing, &c.* This is the language of the wicked, thus they use to speak about the wayes of God; and *Job* hath spoken thus; therefore, *What man is like Job that drinketh scorning like water, which goeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men.* I need not stay here to shew how great an evill it is to keepe evill company, for that was not the sin which *Job* was accused of. Yet from the letter of the Text,

Note first.

To associate with wicked men, or to chuse wicked men for our company, is the mark of a wicked man.

A godly man may be among wicked men, but he doth not chuse their company. He while with them is as *Lot* was in *Sodom*, his righteous soule is vexed. A godly man is among wicked men, as his graces are among his corruptions; as his humility is with his pride, his faith with his unbeliefe, these are all in his soul at once, but his faith doth alwayes strive against his unbeliefe, his humility opposeth his pride, his grace of self-deniall, resists his self-seeking, his meekness his passions, and his patience the unquietness of spirit. A godly man is pained in the company of wicked men, as *David* was (*Psal: 120. 5.*) *Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesek, and dwell in the tents of Kedar.* *David* was there but he did not delight to be there. To associate with the wicked is proper to the wicked. The Apostle gives that caution (*Eph: 5. 11.*) *Have no fellowship with the unfruitfull works of darkness, but rather reprove them.* Seeing the works of darkness are unfruitfull of any good, it must needs be bad to have fellowship with them. As we must not at all joyn with wicked men in spirituall communion or Church-fellowship (*2 Cor: 6. 14.*) *Be not unequally yoked with unbelievers; for what communion hath light with darkness, and Christ with Belial, &c. Come out from among them, and touch no unclean thing.* So we should have as little civill communion or fellowship with them as we can; and when we are necessitated to have civill communion with them, we must utterly avoyd all sinfull communion with them, that is, communion with them in their sins. It is both a shame to Gospel profession and a great offence to the sincere professors of the Gospel, when they who professe it are much in the company of the workers of iniquity, and walke with wicked men.

Secondly, From the matter of the charge,

Observe.

While godly men behave themselves like wicked men, they may be sayd to goe in company with them.

This heavy charge falls justly upon them whether they demeane themselves in their affliction (as *Job* in some sort did) like

like the wicked, or in the dayes of their fullness and prosperity. If we speake or doe like wicked men, we have our amends in our hands if we are numbred with them, though we are not really of their number. Some good men when they have got much of the world about them make but an ill use of it. Are wicked rich men proud? so are they in a great measure, you may see vanity in their houses, and superfluity upon their tables, as if they also were making provision for the flesh to fullfill the lusts thereof. Now if a godly man, when he hath the abundance of this world makes himselfe more unfit for the next world; is he not in this like the wicked? or if when God layeth him low, he be full of complainings and have risings of heart against the dealings of God; what is this but to do like the wicked, who in their straits quarrell with God, & blaspheme his name? (*Isa: 8. ult.*) *When they are hungry and hard beset, they curse their God and their King.* Thus the wicked doe; and it was the Devills plot to make *Job* do so too; and because in the extremity of his sufferings he spake such things as savour'd of a murmuring spirit, *Elihu* taxeth him as walking with wicked men. For as when wicked men act and speake like good men, it may be sayd they goe in the company with the godly, and walke with the workers of righteousness, though they are starke nought all the while, being (as the Apostle gives their character, *Tit: 1. 16.*) *Abominable, disobedient, and unto every good worke reprobate*; So some good men under temptation act and speak like the wicked, yet retaine their goodnes, and are as to the generall state of their persons, and bent of their hearts, acceptable, obedient, and enclined to every good worke. It will doe the wicked no good at last, that they have thus gone in company with the good; but it is very sinfull for and hurtfull to good men, to goe in company or walk with wicked men, though it be but (as *Elihu* makes his proove of it against *Job*) only in using their *Sibboleth*, or speaking a language like theirs.

Vers. 9. *For he hath sayd, it profueth a man nothing that he should delight himselfe with God.*

I shall, First, open the words a little, and then, Secondly, inquire, (as of the former) how *Job* might fall under this accusation.

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He hath sayd, it profiteth a man nothing.

That is, a man shall get nothing, or have no advantage by it. As Christ saith (*Mark 8. 36.*) *What shall it profit a man to gaine the whole world, and lose his owne soule?* But what was this trade which *Elihu* accuseth *Job* to have called unprofitable? Surely that which of all others is most profitable. *It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himselfe with God.*

This goes deep; *Elihu* doth not tax him with saying it profiteth a man nothing to doe this or that good, which God commandeth, but (which is more) *that he should*

delight himselfe with God.

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The word rendred *to delight*, hath a three-fold signification, and all very full to this poynt and text.

First, *To run*, which is the speed of our pace. Thus the Septuagint render it, *Although he run with God* (*Cant: 1. 4.*) *By reason of the savour of thy good ointments, therefore doe the virgins love thee, draw us and we will run after thee.* To run is more then to walk. To walk with God, notes our observance of all holy duties, but to run the way of Gods commandements, notes us zealous in them and for them. To run, requires not only an honest heart, but a large one; and therefore *David* sayd (*Psal: 119. 32.*) *I will run the way of thy commandements, when thou shalt enlarge my heart.* Thou (saith *Elihu* to *Job*) *hast sayd,* (according to this reading of the word) *it shall not profit a man though he run with God,* though he make never so much speed in his work and wayes; though he be (besides faithfull and upright) forward and active for God.

Secondly, The word signifieth *To have or be of the same will or mind with another.* Thus also some render it here; *It profiteth not a man, though he willeth with God, or be of the same mind with God.* The Apostle exhorts (*Phil: 2. 5.*) *Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus.* To will is an internall motion; to run an externall; How fast soever a man may run with God in outward actings, yet, possibly, he doth not will with God at all, nor hath a mind conformable to the mind of God. The hypocrite is thus set out (*Psal: 50. 18, 19.*) *When thou sawest a thiefe, thou con-*

consentedst with him, &c. Thou hadst a mind to be a thiefe as well as he. One wicked man minds and wills the same things with another, and all godly men will the same things with God. Yet (saith *Job*) *it shall not profit a man*, though he have the same will with God, or though he willeth the same good things which God himselve willeth.

Thirdly, The word (according to our translation) signifieth more then barely to will, it takes in the affections and joyes of the soule. He that delighteth in God, hath sweet content and complacency in God, he not only approves of all the sayings and doings of God, he not only followeth his counsell, and his conduct, but is highly pleased and fully satisfied in God. Delight is the rest of the soule. When we delight in God, and find every act of obedience our joy and our song, our meat and our drink, then the heart is wound up to the highest pitch of holiness. And therefore as his heart is fallen downe to the lowest pitch of unholiness, who sayth, it profiteth a man nothing to serve God, so is his much more who saith, *What shall it profit a man though he delight in God?*

But here againe it may be queried, Where did *Job* say, that it should profit a man nothing though he delight himselve with God? If you read his discourse all over, he never spake these words directly or explicite, they are the language of hell. But *Job* had spoken words, which (unless taken in a very favourable construction) might beare this censure. He spake thus, in a manner, while he at once justified himselve so much, and cryed out as much of the hard dealings of God with him. And while in many passages of this Booke he denieth that the godly have a present reward in this life, and also affirmeth that many wicked men enjoy outward prosperity, and passe unpunished. These speeches might easily be interpreted (by common and carnal men especially) that, *Job* thought it an unprofitable thing to delight in God. For if All things in this life come alike to all, to the godly, and to the wicked, what doth it profit a man (as to this life) that he should delight himselve in God? who among the sons of men (that knoweth of no profit beyond this life) can delight himselve in that, which brings no profit? *Job* also sayd (*Chap. 9. 22.*) *God destroyeth the wicked and the righteous*, that is, he afflicts the good as much as the bad, this was a principle which he held out all along.

Videtur principium unde ad omnia peccata feruntur improbi approbasse, est enim premij fides non tantum futuri sed et hujus vite magnum incitamentum ad obsequium.
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Now because the Scripture saith, *He that cometh to God, must believe that God is, and that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him* (Heb: 11. 6.) and (1 Tim: 4. 8.) *Godliness is profitable for all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come;* (which Scriptures though not extant when Job lived, yet the truth contained in them was) *Elihu* might well be led into this apprehension, that *Job* had brought up an ill report upon the wayes of God, as (in this life) unprofitable unto man. But though *Job* spake thus, yet he was farre from speaking this to justifie such an opinion, that there is no profit for a man to delight himselfe with God. His meaning was only this, that a man may want temporall present profit, notwithstanding his delighting in God. He was full and positive enough, that they who now delight in God, besides the present inward peace and profit which they find and feele, shall hereafter be crowned with everlasting rewards and delights. *Job* should indeed have been more in justifying God, more in setting forth the present profitableness of his wayes in the practise of an holy life; And because he was so sparing in this poynt, and insisted so often upon the afflictions of the people of God, *Elihu* chargeth him with saying, *It profiteth a man nothing to delight himselfe with God.*

Hence note; First.

It is our duty, and the summe of all holy duties to delight ourselves in God.

The very spirit of holiness consists in this; There is (as I may call it) a body of holiness; but if you would have the spirit of holiness (as by distillation we take the spirits of any liquor, or of any thing that liquor and moylture hath in it, if, I say, we would have the spirits of holiness) 'tis delighting in God. For as 'tis the spirit of sinfulness to delight in sin; so the spirit of Godliness is to delight in God.

Note.

Secondly, *To account the service of God unprofitable, is wickedness bordering upon blasphemy.*

Job himselfe is now charged with that, which he charged upon the wicked (Chap: 21. 15.) *What is the Almighty that we should serve him? and what profit shall we have that we pray unto him?*

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This grand prophaneſſe the Prophet rebukes (*Mal: 3. 14.*) *Ye have ſaid, It is in vaine to ſerve God, and what profit is there that we have kept his ordinances ?* Thus the carnal heart, which would ſaine free or keepe it ſelfe from keeping the ordinances of God, is ready to queſtion, whether there be any profit in keeping them. And while ſuch ſeeme only to put the queſtion, they indeed conclude, that there is no profit in keeping them; yet the truth is, the very keeping the ordinances of God, as it is an act of obedience to him, and of communion with him is very profitable, though we ſhould have no viſible nor ſenſible profit by it. In keeping the commandements of God, *there is great reward* (*Pſal: 19. 11.*) that is, the keeping of them is a reward, as well as a reward is promiſed to thoſe that keepe them. The Reader may conſult this poynť further, at the 15th verſe of the 21th Chapter.

Note, Thirdly.

Good men ſometimes ſpeak worſe then they meane.

Job never thought it was no profit to ſerve God, yet he had let fall words which might beare that głoſſe. As wicked men often ſpeake better then they meane; They have golden words in their mouths, when there is nothing but dross in their hearts; their words are ſmoothen then oyle, yet they are drawne ſwords; their words ſound well, while they wound deep, (now as a carnal man ſpeakes often better then he meanes, and ſometimes ſpeakes purpoſely the beſt when he meanes worſt) ſo a godly man ſpeakes ſometimes worſe then he meanes, or he may ſpeak ill when he intends nothing but good. Holy *David*. (which comes up fully to the ſerice of what *Job* is taxed for ſaying here) ſayd (and what could he ſpeak more unholyly) (*Pſal: 73. 15.*) *Verily I have cleaned my heart in vaine,* &c. What language was here? would one think to heare *David* ſoule his mouth with ſuch words as theſe? would one think, that ſuch a word could have dropt from the mouth of *David*, whoſe mouth uſed to drop like an honey-comb, & whoſe lips were wont to be like a tree of life feeding many? yet *David* in temptation, that is, in great affliction (for he there complains that he was chaſtened every morning) ſpake thus with his tongue to the grieve of his heart a little after. The tongue is an unruly member, (as the Apoſtle *James* ſaith, *Chap: 3. 8.*) *The tongue can no man tame;* we need a great command upon the heart to

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bridle the tongue, and tame that unruly beast. Many a good man hath been over-borne with his tongue. That little member hath sometimes cruſht both ſoule and body very ſorely. *Jobs* tongue fell heavily upon him.

Obſerve.

Fourthly, *Inconſiderate words render us obnoxious to ſevereſt cenſures.*

Thou haſt ſayd, It profiteth a man nothing to delight himſelfe in God, is a very ſevere cenſure ; And though Job did not deſerve it fully, yet he might have expreſſed himſelfe more commodiouſly and profitably. Juſt conſequences from what we ſay, may be charged upon us as our ſayings. Indeed to wiew-draw words or ſtaine conſequences from them, is very unchriſtian. Some deale ſo with the holy Scriptures (2 Pet: 3. 16.) *Wreſting them to their owne deſtruction ;* They torture and ſtretch them upon the tenters to their owne hurt. And to wreſt a mans words, or as the Prophet ſpeakes (*Iſa: 29. 21.*) *To make a man an offender for a word,* is an act of great uncharitableneſs towards man, and to God an high offence (Not but that a man may be an offender for his words ; nor can a man be more truly an offender for any words, then when he ſpeakes reproachfully or ſleightly of the workes of God) But when men ſpeak ſuch words as are reall offences, and yeild ſoule conſequences, fairly, they muſt beare the burden. And that was *Jobs* caſe here.

But ſome may ſay, If *Job* never ſpake theſe words in termes, nor any words like them, with ſuch an intent, why doth he ſuffer *Elihu* to accuſe him, and not take off his accuſation, nor give a word of answer for himſelfe ? Why did he not vindicate himſelfe, or make his Apology ?

I answer, and my answer ſhall be the laſt note from this context.

A godly man will rather beare more blame then he deſerveth, then ſtand to excuſe himſelfe when he hath deſerved any blame.

Job replied no more, ſpake no more, but to ſhew that he yeilded to what was ſayd, and ſubmitted to this diſpenſation of God in ſending *Elihu* to charge him thus. He tooke more upon him then he had ſayd, leſt he ſhould ſeeme to juſtifie any thing that
he

he had sayd amisse. (*Chap: 40. 5.*) *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer : yea twice, but I will proceed no further.* As if he had sayd, I will make no more pleas for my selfe, nor excuses, I will cry guilty to the whole matter of my charge, though I might cleare and discharge my selfe of much of it. How far was the spirit of Job from theirs, who though charged with that only which they have directly done, or spoken, yet stand it out in pleading their excuse, and will never fall downe before reproofes, though what they have done or spoken amisse, be so plaine, that it needs no prooffe.

We should be carefull to speake and doe such things as are not subject to reproofe, but when through ignorance or rashnes we have run into an error, either of speech or practise, we should be so humble as to subject our selves to reproofe, and take it well that we are rebuked for any evill. As it doubles an offence to undertake the defence of it, so not to defend an offence abateth and lesseneth it. And as he who goeth about to cover his fault by finding out arguments and pleas for it, sheweth that he hath a will or purpose to continue in it ; so he that is silent, and hath not a word to say for it, gives a good testimony both of his sorrow that he ever committed it, and of his resolution never to commit it any more. They are highly to be commended who live unblameably, and they deserve no small commendation, who being sensible of their owne sayling, can patiently beare the blame of it, without replying upon their reprovers.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 10, 11.

*Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding :
far be it from God, that he should doe wickednesse,
and from the Almighty, that he should commit ini-
quity.*

*For the work of a man shall he render unto him, and
cause every man to find according to his wayes.*

Elibu having done with Jobs charge for severall unwarrantable sayings in the former context, begins his refutation here, and directs his speech.

First, To Jobs friends, speaking to them from the 10th to the 16th verse.

Secondly, To Job himselfe, from the 16th verse of this Chapter to the 34th.

In the two verses now read, we have two generall poynts.

First, A vehement deniall of any unrighteousnesse in God, (v. 10.)

Secondly, A strong prooffe or demonstration, that there is no unrighteousnesse in God, at the 11th verse. He enters this confutation of Job, or the vindication of the honour of God from what Job had sayd, with an inviting Preface.

Vers. 10. *Therefore hearken unto me, ye men of understanding.*

Elibu like a cunning Orator often stir'd up his auditors to attention, and made frequent insinuations to winde himselfe and what he had to say into their good opinion. Here he bespake not the promiscuous multitude or common sort of hearers, but wise men, or men of understanding, such as are most fit to judge the weight and strength of those arguments and reasons, by which any poynt is proved and confirmed.

Hearken unto me, ye men of understanding.

The Hebrew is, *ye men of heart*, so the Margin hath it; As the heart is the principle of naturall life, so the principles & powers
of

of the rationall life are often ascribed to the heart. *Job* told his friends (*Chap. 12. 3.*) *I have a heart* (we render, *I have an understanding*) *as well as you*; and in good Authors a *heartly man* signifies not only a man of courage, or a man of spirit, but a man of knowledge and understanding, a man more then ordinarily wise, a man of the highest Elevation for wisdom, is called a *heartly man*. Naturalists have ascribed the moving of severall passions, to severall internall parts of the body; laughter (say they) riseth from the *spleene*, anger from the *Gall*, love from the *liver*, but to the heart they give more then a passion, *understanding*, which is the noblest faculty of reason. Here *Elihu* calls upon men of heart, or of understanding to hearken to him.

Egregie cordatus homo. i. e. valde sapiens. Cic: 1. Tuscul.

Hence note.

First, *The best may need to have their attentions quickened.*

Some will not heare at all, they are like the *deafe adder* (*Psal. 48. 4, 5.*) *that stoppeth her eare, which will not hearken to the voyce of the charmer, charming never so wisely*; The Prophet reproves such (*Jer. 6. 10.*) *To whom shall I speak and give warning, that they may heare, behold their eare is uncircumcised and they cannot hearken*; behold, the *Word of the Lord* is to them a reproach, they have no delight in it; they cannot hearken, that is, they will not; or they cannot hearken, that is spiritually and obedientially, though they have a naturall, yet they have not a gracious eare, as the same Prophet (*chap. 11. 6, 7, 8.*) upbraided them; yet they obeyed not, nor enclined their eare. This sinfull deafnesse the Lord complained of also, (*Psal. 81. 8.*) *Heare O my people, (saith God) and at the 11 verse, My people would not hearken to my voyce*; Now as bad men will not heare at all to purpose; so the best seldome hear so well or to so good purpose as they ought and might. Men of heart or of understanding are sometimes slow of hearing, and may need to have their eare awakened.

Secondly, note.

It is an encouragement in speaking to have understanding hearers.

When a people have not only eares, but hearts to heare, then the word is heard indeed. We may suppose understanding men will probably prove the best hearers; the Prophet was in hope.

to find it so, though he failed of his hopes. (*Jer. 5. 4.*) *Surely these are poore, they are foolish (men of low parts, and thin intellectualls) for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God. I will get me to the great men and will speake unto them, for they have knowne the way of the Lord, (they are wise surely and understanding) yet he was disappoynted in his recourse to them, as it followeth in the same verse, but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds. There is a naturall wisdom which hindereth the hearing of the word, therefore the Apostle saith ; Not many wise men after the flesh are called, that is, savingly called ; the word hath its full effect upon few of them, they are not prevailed with to beleieve and obey ; they are called, but they come not. Though wisdom be an advantage to profitable hearing, yet all naturall wise men doe not hear profitably, nor indeed can any, by all the wisdom of nature.*

Thirdly, note.

A man without understanding is a heartlesse man.

Headlesse men are heartlesse men. It is said (*Hos. 7. 11.*) *Ephraim is like a silly dove without a heart.* All the people of God are or should be innocent doves, like doves for innocency and gracious simplicity ; but how unbecoming is it that any of them should be doves for silliness or *silly doves without a heart* ; that is without any spirit or courage for God, and the things or wayes of God. To be without a heart is to be without a due apprehension of the mind of God, or any true conformity thereunto ; 'tis to have no knowledge either to doe good, or to be good ; all such are silly doves without a heart, without understanding, and all such are yet unfit and unprepared hearers. *Hearken to me ye men of understanding,*

Farre be it from God that he should doe wickedly.

*Abstine a me coram domino im-
pie agere &c.
Sept:*

The Septuagint turn the sence of the words into another channel ; as if *Elihu* spake here in his own vindication, and not in Gods ; and so they render the Text personally of *Elihu* ; *Farre be it from me that I should do wickedly before God ; or that I should pervert Justice before the Almighty* ; as if *Elihu* had said ; *I am now to speake before God, or in Gods presence ; God being my wit-
nesse,*

ness, therefore I had need look to it while I am speaking before the righteous God, that I speake righteously, and while I speake before the God of truth, that I speake according unto truth; farre be it from me that I should doe wickedly before God; there is a truth in this translation. But this is not a true translation according to the Hebrew; nor is it the truth of this place. *Elihu* speaking in so weighty a matter might well say farre be it from me to pervert justice so much as in a word, because I speake before God, and am in the presence of the Almighty. We should not speak a word amisse in his sight or hearing, who seeth and heareth what all men doe and say, whatsoever they are doing or saying, especially, when they are doing or saying that which is of neare concernment to himselfe. This rendring gives us a usefull caution. But doubtlesse *Elihu's* purpose here was not to shew with what reverence of God, himselfe was about to speak, but that he was about to speak for the vindication of the righteousness of God, which he thought *Job* had wronged by that assertion when he said, (*vers. 9.*) *It profiteth a man nothing that he should delight himself with God.* Hereupon *Elihu* with some heat of spirit turnes upon him in these words,

Farre be it from God that he should doe wickedly.

The word rendred God forbid is often used in Scripture, implying the greatest detestation and utter abhorrence of that which is extreemly offensive to us; the root of it signifieth any thing that is prophane, filthy, or polluted; because all prophane things and persons are farre from God, that is, such as he utterly abhorreth. Further, the verbe signifieth as to pollute, or to prophane, so to offer violence, to wound and kill unjustly or murderously; which sence complyeth fully with the businesse in hand. *Job* had complained that his innocency, at least that he being innocent, was sorely afflicted and wounded, and lay as it were weltring in his gore and blood. Hereupon *Elihu* stands up to vindicate the righteousness and justice of God, *Farre be it from God, &c.* When a Judge doth unrighteously he offereth violence to the Law, and viciates that chaste Virgin Justice, committed to his care and keeping. All acts of injustice are therefore farre from God, even the abomination of his soul, because polluted and filthy in themselves, as also such as pollute and defile all those that use them.

Profanum autopollutum esse. A deo procul est omne profanum. Assessionem indicat animi, quæ scelus aliquid agere, vel ab alio deprecatur et horret. Sanctus

Thus *Abraham* spake to God (*Gen. 18. 23, 25.*) *Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked, that be farre from thee, &c.* He spake of it with indignation as a thing most unworthy of God, to wrap up good and bad in the same common calamity. When all *Josephs* brethren as one man (*Gen. 44. 17.*) offered to become his prisoners, *God forbid* (said he) *that I should doe so,* ye shall not all suffer for one mans fault; let that be farre from me, he that is found in fault only shall be my prisoner. Thus *Elihu* would remove the remotest suspicion of unrighteousnesse from God when he saith, *farre be it from God that he should doe wickedness.*

Hence note.

We should reject all unworthy thoughts of God with indignation and detestation.

The Apostle shewed a spirit full of this fire (*Rom. 3. 5, 6.*) *Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance?* (*I speak as a man*) that is, naturall or carnall men are apt to think so, but *God forbid*, or, let it not be once named by those who name (that is, profess) the name of God. If every one *who nameth the name of Christ must depart from iniquity* (*2 Tim. 2. 19.*) woe to those who say that Christ himself closeth with any iniquity. As God himself puts all evill farre from him, so should we put the least thought of it farre from God. What can be more unjust then to have so much as the shadow of a thought that God doth any injustice! away with such blasphemous suggestions, can he who is the very rule of righteousness doe unrighteously? To throw this dirt into the face of God hath as much absurdity and irrationality as blasphemy in it. None but they who know not God, can have such apprehensions of him. To doe wickednesse is farre from God, and therefore let man be farre, even as farre as the east is from the west, from saying or thinking that he doth any. *Farre be it from God*

That he should doe wickedness.

¶ Significat quod non peccati genus, quod contra equitatem sit nor-

The Text is, *farre be it from God from wickedness*, we render *that he should doe wickedness*. The word signifieth *wickedness* of the worst sort; that wickedness which does not only break the Law (so every the least sin doth) but slights it, and denyeth it any

any reverence or regard. It is farre from a godly man to sin at this rate, to doe wickednesse. Then, O how farre is it from God that he should doe wickednesse, *nam, omnique
careat, legu
ratione. Bold:*

And from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.

Elihu useth two Titles or Names of God, First, *the strong God*, the mighty God. Secondly, *Almighty*, the Allsufficient God; farre be it from the *Allsufficient that he should doe any iniquity*. He that hath all things in his power, and can command Heaven and Earth, heart and hand, he that is able to supply all deficiencies in the creature by his allsufficiency, farre be it from this *Allmighty God* that he should commit *iniquity* towards man. Strength without goodnesse is alwayes unprofitable, and often hurtfull. Goodnesse without strength is very unusefull because so weak. But where both strength and goodnesse meete and center in the same person, as he is able to doe much good, so he hath no will to doe evill or offer injury to others. How then should the *Allsufficient commit iniquity*?

The word rendred *iniquity* signifies any crookedness or perversnesse, any distortion of right and justice. Now right or justice is distorted many wayes, chiefly these five.

First, by a flat denyall of it. Secondly, by a tedious delaying of it. Thirdly, by punishing where there is no fault. Fourthly, by not rewarding where there is desert. Fifthly, Justice or right is distorted, by giving the same or a-like award to those who are unlike, or (in their acts or deserts, whether good or bad) not the same. To doe any of these perverse or crooked things is the doing of iniquity, or the perverting of Justice. All these *Elihu* removeth farre from God, while he saith, *Farre be it from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity*. God will not, cannot commit iniquity, either by denying or delaying justice, either by not punishing or rewarding where there is cause, or by dealing out alike to those in whose doing and dispositions there is an utter unlikeness. *Farre be it from the Almighty, that he should commit any of these iniquities.*

*liv fraudem
aliquands innu-
it. Et generali-
ter dicitur de
omni injuria
omniq; malo
contra leges.*

Hence note.

First, *To doe any act of injustice is wickednesse.*

Elihu taxed *Job*, for complaining of Gods Justice (v. 9.) And

here he ſaith, *Far be it from God, that he ſhould doe wickedneſſe.* Injuſtice is wickedneſſe againſt God, who commandeth us to be juſt, and it is wickedneſſe againſt man, who is alwayes wronged by injuſtice.

Secondly, As to that particular which *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with.

Note.

If the Lord ſhould not reward thoſe that ſerve him, and delight in him, he were unrighteous.

(*Heb. 6. 10.*) *God is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love*; He is not unrighteous to forget it, that is, not to recompence it; by forgetting it, he doth not meane the letting of it ſlip out of his mind, but the not making a due returne to it, or the not giving it a juſt reward. It is unrighteousneſſe in God not to reward thoſe who ſerve him, becauſe he hath promiſed to reward them. *Say to the righteous, it ſhall be well with him* (*Iſa. 3. 10.*) The promiſes run to it, all the Scripture over; and as it would be unrighteousneſſe in God not to reward thoſe that do well; ſo not to pardon them that have done ill when they confeſſe their evill deeds, becauſe he hath promiſed to pardon them; and therefore the Scripture ſaith (*1 John 1. 9.*) *If we confeſſe our ſins, he is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſins.* The Scripture doth not ſay, he is mercifull to forgive us our ſins, (though mercy act to the higheſt in the forgivenes of ſin) but he is faithfull and juſt to forgive us our ſins; and the reaſon why the Scripture ſaith ſo, is becauſe forgivenes of ſin (in caſe of confeſſion) is under a promiſe. To come ſhort of our promiſes, is to be unrighteous; promiſes are bonds upon the promiſer, and oblige to performance.

Thirdly, Note.

The ſtrong God, the mighty God, neither doth nor can doe any unrighteousneſſe or iniquity.

I ſay, he neither doth nor can doe iniquity. God can doe no iniquity, becauſe in him there is none. *He is my rocke* (ſaith *David*, *Pſal. 92. 15.*) *and there is no unrighteousneſſe in him.* As none can doe righteouſneſſe, but they that are righteous, ſo he that neither is nor can be unrighteous, cannot doe any unrighteousneſſe. That in the *Pſalme* is very conſiderable, that while he ſaith, *There*

is no unrighteousnesse in God, he immediately before said, *He is way rocke*; implying that God can no more be moved or removed from doing righteously, then a rocke can be removed out of its place. We find *Moses* also giving God the same attribute, when he spake of his indeclinableness in justice (*Deut. 32. 4.*) *He is a rocke, his worke is perfect, all his wayes are Judgement.* The wayes of God are not all judgement, as Judgement is opposed to mercy; some of his wayes are mercy, and others of them are Judgement; but all his wayes are judgement, as Judgement is opposed to injustice or unrighteousnesse, that's the signification of Judgement, when *Moses* saith, *All his wayes are Judgement, he is a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.* The Apostle puts this denying question with much vehemency (*Rom. 9. 14.*) *What shall we say then, is there unrighteousnesse with God? God forbid.* And 'tis very considerable that the Apostle put this question with so much abhorrence, presently after he had spoken of that Act of God which is so much quarrelled at by the sons of men, as unrighteous and unjust; *Esaue have I hated, and Jacob have I loved, and that, when they had done neither good nor evill (v. 11.)* What (say some) will God doe thus? will he hate or love, before ever men doe good or evill? yea, such acts of love and hatred, of election and rejection are gone out from God: And because *Paul* foresaw, that men (according to their narrow apprehension) would be ready to say, surely God is not right in this; therefore he subjoynes, *What shall we say then? is there unrighteousnesse in God?* As if he had sayd, I know some men will be ready enough to say so, and thinke they have reason enough to say so; They all must needs say so, who measure God by their shallow braines, (such are the deepest braines compared with God) and therefore *Arminius*, with his followers, (that they may avoyd this difficulty) carry the interpretation of this Scripture to another poynt, as if it had nothing to doe with the eternall purpose of God concerning man, but only respected his dealings with them about temporalls, or his dealing out temporalls to them. I urge that text because it hath occasion'd (through mans corruption) great contending and quarrelling about the righteousness of God; yea some have presumed, there can be no maintaining that opinion of the absolute decree, without fastening unrighteousnesse upon God. But the Apostle by the Spirit foreseeing this fleshly objection,

tion, hath forelayed and prevented it, concluding, *O man, who art thou that repleyest against God, shall the clay contend with the potter, &c.*

Now, as in this act of eternal Election, so in all providentiall acts, the Lord is infinitely unmoveably and unspottedly just and righteous; he not only doth righteous things, but he cannot doe any thing that is unrighteous. And this seeming impotency is the reall power of God, and his most glorious perfection. For, as 'tis from the weaknesse of man that he can doe iniquity, so 'tis from the power of God that he cannot. That God cannot lye, that he cannot doe any unworthy thing, is an argument of his omnipotence. God can no more doe iniquity, then he can cease to be God; his righteousness, his justice is himselfe; the Justice of God is the just God, the righteousness of God, is the righteous God; he hath not only a principle of righteousness in him, as man may have, and every Godly man truly hath, but he is righteousness. A Heathen Poet had this apprehension of his Idol Gods; *They love not unrighteousnesse, but honour Justice.* But Jehovah the true, the living God, doth more then affectionately love and honour Justice, He is essentially Just. That man who is in a state of righteousness, loves to be doing and will doe righteous acts; things and persons are in their working as they are in their being; *He that doth righteousness is righteous,* (1 John 3. 7.) God is righteous, infinitely righteous, in his being, or nature, therefore he cannot but doe that which is righteous; to doe an unrighteous act were to offer violence to himselfe, to destroy himselfe.

Again, God doth not worke by a rule without him, as men doe (and therefore men often goe beside the rule, and doe amisse, or act unrighteously, because the rule is one thing, and they are another, the rule is without them) but God himselfe is the very rule of all things, and hence it followeth undeniably, that every thing is righteous and just which he doth, even because he doth it; 'tis enough to prove that right which is done, if we can prove God hath done it. The proud Monarch *Nebuchadnezzar*, was at last brought to this confession (*Dan: 4. 34, 35.*) *At the end of the dayes* (namely, of his seven yeares banishment to the beasts) *I Nebuchadnezzar lift up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the most high, &c. who doth according to his will* (there is the rule with him) *in the Army*

Θεὸς δὲ ἑστέλα-
πα ἔργα τῶν
σ, ἀλλὰ δίκην
τῶν. Homer:

of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can ſtay his hand, nor ſay unto him, what doſt thou? Which is true upon a double account; Firſt, as to his ſoveraignty and dominion, he is ſupream Lord, and none can give him a check or countermund; *Who may ſay unto him, what doſt thou?* Secondly, with reſpect to his righteouſneſſe. As he can doe what he will; ſo he will doe nothing, yea he can doe nothing but what is right, or what he may; *Who can ſay unto him, thou haſt done amiſſe? Who can ſee a fault, in any of his workes?* If God hath done a thing, there is no query to be put about it whether it be right or no? for he is righteouſneſſe it ſelfe.

Abraham uſeth another argument to ſhew that God can doe no unrighteouſneſſe (*Gen: 18. 25.*) *Shall not the Judge of all the earth doe right?* God (ſaith he) is the Judge of all men, therefore he neither will nor can doe wrong to any man. *Abraham* did not plead there, as if he doubted that God might goe wrong, unleſſe he by his interceſſion did take him off; but he brings an argument whereby he was aſſured that God would doe right, yea could not but doe right. *He is the Judge of all the earth.* So (*Rom: 3. 6.*) aſſoone as the Apoſtle had ſayd, *Is God unrighteous that takes vengeance?* I ſpeak as a man; he ſubjoynes, *God forbid, how then ſhall God judge the world?* God is Judge of all the world, and the univerſality of his power puts him above all poſſibility of error in the exerciſe of his power. The very reaſon why God doth not, cannot exerciſe his power beyond or beſides the limits of juſtice, is becauſe his power is altogether unlimited.

Fourthly, *Elihu* here ſpeakes of God under the notion of a Judge; *Shall he doe wickedly? ſhall he commit iniquity?*

Hence note.

It is an abomination for Judges to doe unjuſtly.

Judges have juſtice, as it were, in their keeping, they have the charge of juſtice; is it not an abomination for the keepers or proreſtors of Juſtice to violate it! *Elihu* having thus denied unrighteouſneſſe or any iniquity in God, proceeds to the prooſe of it. To deny had been enough in this matter; but he gives a demonſtration; as ſeverall have been held out already in proſecuting the former obſervation, ſo the following text holds out another:

*Vers. 11. For the worke of a man shall he render unto him, and
cause every man to find according to his waye.*

As if he had said, God doth every man right, therefore he is righteous, and there is no iniquity in him.

Elihu having denied any unrighteousness to be in God, here sheweth how he exerciseth righteousness.

The worke of a man shall he render to him.

The work of a man is here put for the reward, issue, or fruit of his work; God doth not render every mans work to him in kind, that is, the thing it selfe which he hath done, but the work in its result and reward. That which God returneth to a man according to his work, may be called a reward in a fourfold respect. First, because it hath in it the benefit of a reward to the worker. Secondly, because it is given in answer to the work done. Thirdly, because God hath given his people leave, yea a command to beleve and waite for good fruit to themselves, when they doe good works. Fourthly, because it is proportion'd to the work or duty performed. For as good is returned for good, so great good is returned for great good done. Though the greatest good that ever was or can be done by a meere creature doth not deserve (by any intrinsick worth) the least good at the hand of God. Thus saith the Spirit (*Rev. 14. 13.*) *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord, from hence forth they rest from their labours, and their works follow them*; not the workes which they did, but that which is by promise due to them for those workes. The Prophet assureth us (*Isa. 32. 17.*) *The work of righteousness is peace*; we cannot understand it as a direct predication, but peace is the fruit or issue of the worke of righteousness, or as the latter part of the verse clearly expounds it, *The effect of righteousness shall be quietness and assurance for ever*. Which as it is most true of the righteousness of Christ, who is our peace (*Ephes. 2. 14.*) and our Peacemaker through the blood of his cross (*Col. 1. 20.*) So it is true of mans righteousness, the work whereof is (by promise) crowned with the blessings of peace, both spirituall and corporall, temporall and eternall. *The work of a man*

Shall

Shall he render unto him.

The word signifies a full retribution, it signifies also, in the Noun, *peace*; because when accounts are fully returned or rendered all is settled and quiet; when a man upon account is discharged, he hath a *quietus est*, that is an acquittance wherein he may be quiet; none can legally molest or trouble him. That which God will returne to all men, they must and shall rest in, though that which he will render to man for his evill works unrepented of, will give him no rest.

שלם reddere
ad pacem perti-
net; quæ loquu-
tio significat
perfectam debi-
ti alicujus reso-
lutionem.
Bold:

The work of a man shall he render unto him.

The word is very generall; he doth not say this, that, or 'to-ther worke, but *the work*, which is as much as an universall, *every work of a man*, his good works, and his bad works, his open works, and his secret works, his great and lesser works, there is not the least graine of a mans works, that shall be unanswered or un-re-turned to him; and, when the Text saith *the work of a man &c.* we are not to take works in an exclusive sence, either first, as to words, as if God would render to man his works, but not his words; mans words will come to an account as well as his works; they must be answered for whether good or bad. (*Math. 12. 36, 37.*) *For every idle word, that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment; for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned;* that is, it shall be rendered to thee according to thy words, or as thy words have been, so it shall be with thee. Nor secondly, are we to take the works of a man, exclusively, or in opposition to his thoughts; as if God would render to man what he hath acted outwardly, but not what he hath acted inwardly; or would passe by his thoughts. We must give an account of our thoughts, which are the spring of our works as well as of our words, which are the publishers and pro-claimers of them. *God shall bring every work* (saith *Solomon, Eccl. 12. 14.*) *to judgment, and every secret thing,* the most secret whispers of the tongue, and the most secret plottings, contrivings, devisings, designings, yea the simple and single thinkings of the heart. These are not only the moulds and principles of every work, but every one of these is a work, and all of them the whole work of the inner man; whose work, or what is wrought there, is

C c c c

chiefly

chiefly, as well as only, under the inspection and eye of God.

Againe, *The work of a man shall he render unto him, &c.* He doth not say the works of another man shall he render to any man, but the work of a man shall he render to him; he that doth the work shall have the reward; the works of one man shall not be rendered to another, but every mans own works shall. As the faith of another man shall not help us, if we have no faith; *Abrahams* faith (who had a mighty faith) will doe us no good, if we have no faith of our own, so the good works of another man shall doe us no good if we have none of our own. And as not the good works, so the evill works of others, shall not be rendered to us. The hurtfull works of others shall not hurt us, if we doe no hurt. I grant we may partake of the evill works of others, yea, we may make other mens works our own, either by consenting to them before they are done, or by approving them after they are done, or by not reprovng them, when we have opportunity. In these and many other cases, we may make other mens evill works our own; and so farre as other mens works are our own, God shall render them also unto us: Hence that caution given by the Apostle to *Timothy* (1 Tim. 5. 22.) *Lay hands suddainly on no man, neither be partaker of other mens sins, keep thy self pure.* They that partake (in any of those wayes mentioned before, or in any other way) of any mans sins may also quickly partake of his punishment. Thus *John* heard a voyce from Heaven (Rev. 18. 4.) saying *come out of her* (that is, out of Babylon) *my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.* Not only is that work ours which we doe, but that also may be ours, by participation, which others do. And by what title soever a work becomes any mans, *the worke of the man shall God render unto him.*

And he will cause every man to find according to his wayes.

This latter part of the verse containes the same thing with the former in another cloathing of words.

*In semita viarum
inveniet eum.*

Some read the Text thus, *and he will find every man in his way;* let man goe in what way he will, God will meet with him. That's a truth, God will meet or find a man in a good way to encourage, guide, assist and reward him. And God will meet or find a man in an evill way, to stop, oppose and punish him. God will find every

every man in his way, and man shall find God to him according as the way is wherein he findeth him.

We render very well, and fully to the sence, *he will cause every man to find according to his way.*

I find an Interpreter over-curiously distinguishing between a Cajetanus. mans *work* and his *way*, which doubtlesse here, in effect, are the same, yet there may be a graduall difference; *work* being taken for this or that particular act, and *way*, for a continued course either good or evill.

Againe, The *way* of a man may be considered in association with his ends. Every man goeth such or such a way for some special end; no man takes a step in any way without a purpose, nor doth any wise or good man take a step in any way without a good purpose. Yet there is (*finis operis*) an end or issue of the work, as also (*finis operantis*), an end proposed by the worker. And oftentimes that proves to be the end of a work which was not the end purposed by the worker. The end of a mans work or way, proves sometimes better and sometimes worse then he proposed. Possibly a man may not find according to that end of his way and work which he intended not, whether good or evill. But assuredly whatsoever good or evill end a man proposeth to himself, when he enters upon his work or way, God will cause him to find accordingly. So that when *Elihu* saith, *God will cause every man to find according to his way*, he intimates, that God will not only render to man according to the matter of his work, or outward path of his way, but well considereth every mans scope and intendment, or what he would have his work issue in, and causeth him to find as he findeth that to be. As the end which man proposeth to himselfe, hath a great influence upon his way, so upon his account with God about it. This is a good sence. God will cause every man to find according to his way, both as his way is taken for the matter or course of his actions, as also for the scope and design of them.

Hence Observe, First.

Every man shall have according to what he hath done.

Our receivings will be according to our layings out, whether good or evill. God is so farre from doing any man wrong, that every man shall have his due reward. (*Psal. 62. 12.*) *Also to*

III *via, actiones significat quatenus ad finem diriguntur; Quemadmodum via initur motu et terminatur causa. Emphaticè via dicuntur actiones ad certum finem dirigere.* Coc

thee O Lord belongeth mercy, for thou renderest to every man according to his work. And lest any should hope to escape the evill which at least some of their evill works deserve by the secrecy of them, that hope is quite dashed because God is the searcher and seer not only of our works but of our hearts (*Prov. 24. 12.*) *Doth not he that pondereth the heart consider it, and he that keepeth the soul, doth not he know it? (what followes?) and shall not he render to every man according to his works?* Solomon speaks in that place of such as make excuses to shift themselves off from acts of charity; they will say, we know not whether it be so with him or no; possibly he may not be in such want as he pretendeth. Take heed, of these cloaks of covetousnesse, and pitifull pleas to save your purses from shewing pity to the poor, for (saith Solomon) *Will not God search it out, and render to every man according to his worke?* The holy Scripture abounds in this poynt. Read *Jer. 32. 19. Ezek. 33. 10. Rom. 2. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 17. Rev. 22. 12.*

But some may say, how doth God render to every man his work? Is it not said *He justifieth the ungodly* (*Rom. 4. 5.*) Are the works of an ungodly man rendred to him, when he is justified?

I answer, it is one thing what God will do through free grace, and another what he will deale out in strictnesse of Justice. The Apostle speaks in that place of the free grace of God to sinners, not of his Justice against sinners. Secondly, though God justifieth the ungodly, yet he never justifieth ungodlinesse; or, though he justifieth a man who hath done many evill works, yea all whose works are evill, yet he never justifieth nor rewardeth the work of an evill man. Thirdly, God acts according to justice and righteousness where he justifieth the ungodly; he doth not shew favour to the ungodly in his own wrong. Acts of grace from God are not opposite to his Justice, much lesse doe they contradict or overthrow it. He doth not justify an ungodly man in himselfe, or meerly considered in his ungodlinesse, but he justifieth him in the righteousness of another, even of Jesus Christ, who hath given full satisfaction to the Justice of God with respect to the ungodly whom he justifieth. Lastly, we may say, that God renders the work of an ungodly man to him when he justifieth him; for though then he hath not done, nor ever can doe any works which deserve the

the justification of his person; yet God doth render to him, according to that present work of faith in closing with the promise and the work of Christs righteousness therein tendered to him, and applied by him for his justification.

Further, that other Scripture seems to lye in the way of this observation (*Psal. 103. 10.*) *He hath not dealt with us after our sins, or rewarded us according to our iniquities.* How then doth God render every man his work?

I answer as before; Acts of mercy do not cross acts of justice. When the Lord doth not deal with any man according to his sins, it is because he hath freely pardoned his sins; and he doth not reward a man according to his iniquity, because his iniquities are done away; thus he deals with all his own people, who are received to favour through Jesus Christ; but no wicked man, no impenitent person in the world, shall have cause to say, that God hath not dealt with him according to his sin, or hath not rewarded him according to his iniquity. There may be some present stops of Justice, through the patience of God to wicked men; their works are not alwayes presently rendered into their bosomes, but they shall. God will render to every man according to his work, one way or other, one time or other; The full rendering to all men according to their works will be at the great day; in this world the godly doe not sometimes receive according to their good works, nor doe the wicked according to their evill works; Good men are often rewarded with shame and reproach, with want and poverty, with banishment and imprisonment, with tortures and with death in this present world; but the Lord will have a time to render to them according to their workes, though at no time for their works; so look upon wicked men, and their workes, they goe often unpunished at the present, yea many of them prosper greatly (as I have had occasion to shew more then once in opening this Book) they have their good things, many good things in this life, but the time will come when God will render to the wicked their work, and they shall be forced to say, that he hath caused them to find according to their wayes. Take two or three inferences from this generall truth.

If God will render the work of a man to him; Then

First, Godly men have great encouragement to doe good, yea to abound in doing good workes. That's the Apostles argument

men: (1 Cor: 15. 58.) *Be ye stedfast and unmoveable in the worke of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord*; that is, the Lord will render to every man his labour. Hence also that of Solomon (Eccl: 11. 1.) *Cast thy bread upon the waters, for thou shalt find it after many dayes*. Charities done in faith as an holy offering to God, produce a sure encrease. To give with a right heart to the poore, is the best way of growing rich. For God will render to man according to that work. And as it may incourage to doe good, so to doe it against all discouragements. We must not only doe good when the Sun shines, when it is faire weather with us, and all men applaud us; but though men frowne and scorne, though (which Solomon reports as one of the great vanities of this world, Eccl: 4. 4.) *For a right worke, a man be envied of his neighbour*; let us not hold our hand from doing good, though we are opposed and checkt, though we are traduced and slandered, though we are mis-interpreted and have the foulest glosses put upon our fairest workes, though men call our zeale madness and our circumspect walking hypocrisie, yea though we are persecuted and suffer the worst of evils, though men cast stones at us (as they did at Christ for his good workes) yet let us not be deterred from doing good. For howsoever men deale with us, or what rendings soever we find from the world, yet God will render to us both according to the rightnesse of our worke done, and according to the uprightnesse of our hearts in doing it. Let this provoke us not only to doe the Lords worke, but to doe it with much patience, and perseverance, for *in due time we shall reape if we faint not*; where there hath been sowing, there will be reaping; and where the seed time hath been with tearès, the harvest or reaping time shall be with joy.

Secondly, This is a dreadfull doctrine to *evill workers*; Some (as the Apostle calls the *Cretians*, out of their owne Prophet) *are evill beasts, slow bellies*; and as they are slothfull, or slow bellies at doing good: so they are very free and forward, very quicke, lively, and nimble beasts in doing evill. O how should evill workers tremble at this Scripture, *To every man will God render according to his worke*; as a cup of cold water given to a disciple; in the name of a disciple, shall not be lost, but have a reward, and the giver fully payd for it; (*Math: 10. 42.*) so not any the least evill worke, impenitently continued in, shall be unpunished.

Further,

Further, God will not render to man according to the opinion he hath of himſelfe. (A bad man and the worſt of his workes may be good in his owne conceit ; *He may flatter himſelfe in his owne eyes, untill his iniquity be found to be hatefull*, Pſal: 36. 2.) But God will render unto man according to what his workes are in truth.

Secondly, God will not render to man according to the thoughts which others have of him and of his work (ſome are high in the opinion not only of the world, but of ſome Good men, they have a name to be alive while they are dead, and their workes dead workes) but God will render to man according to that cleare, certaine, and infallible knowledge, which himſelfe (by whom *actions are weighed*, 1 Sam: 2. 3.) hath of them.

Thirdly, God will not render to man according to his good meanings, when his workes are evill ; many will confeſſe they have done amiſſe, but they had good intendments in it. A right end will not excuſe us, if our way be wrong ; There is no pleading of meanings againſt commandements ; nor will ſincerity of intentions, cover the deformity and irregularity of actions. The Apoſtle pronounceth a fearefull doome againſt thoſe who ſayd (*Rom: 3. 8.*) *Let us doe evill that good may come, whoſe damnation is juſt.*

Fourthly, As God will not render according to a mans good ends, if his worke be evill ; ſo remember, God will not render to man according to his good workes, if his ends are bad. Therefore, conſider your end when you enter your way, and begin your worke. (*Pro: 21. 27.*) *The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord ; how much more when he bringeth it with an evill mind ;* that is, when he hath ſome bad end in doing it ; A wicked mans ſacrifice is an abomination to the Lord at the beſt, but much more when he hath baſe deſignes in his ſacrifices or holy ſervices. Herod ſayd to the wiſe men (*Mathi 3. 8.*) *Goe and ſearch diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him bring me word againe, that I may come and worſhip him alſo :* It was a good worke to enquire after Chriſt, and worſhip him, but his end was to deſtroy him. Jezebel pretended a holy faſt, but her end was to feaſt her ſelfe with revenge upon innocent *Naboth*. The beſt workes of hypocrites will have an ill returne, becauſe they doe them with an evill mind. There are three ſorts of good workes, which will never turne to a good account. Firſt,

First, Those good works which are done but for a season ; temporary good workes, or the good workes of temporary professors, such as are described (*Math: 13. 5. 7.*) by the 2d and 3d grounds, who bring forth for a while, but afterwards fall away ; such good workes (I say) shall not have a good reward. If your goodness be as the morning cloud, and as the early dew it passeth away, it will doe you no good. *He that endureth to the end shall be saved,* and none but he (*Math: 10. 22.*) Christ exhorts the Church (*Rev: 3. 11.*) *Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crowne.* They loose the good workes they have done, who hold not out in doing them. It will not advantage us to begin in the Spirit, if we end in the flesh.

Secondly, Those good works which are trusted to; or boasted of, will never make a good returne. Though a man should continue doing good all the dayes of his life, yet if he buildeth his hope upon it, *his hope shall be cut off, and his trust* (that is, what he trusteth to) *shall be a spiders web* (that is, weake like that, because like that, woven out of his owne bowels) *he shall leane upon his house, but it shall not stand, he shall hold it fast, but it shall not endure* (*Job 8. 14, 15.*) you and your workes will perish together, if you depend upon your workes. Good workes trusted to, are as dangerous to the soule, as evill workes persevered in.

Thirdly, Those good workes which are done for base ends, to serve men, or to compasse a worldly interest, shall have no reward from God, but that, which shall be upon every soule that sinneth and repenteth not, anguish and tribulation.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 12, 13.

Yea, surely God will not doe wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement.

Who hath given him a charge over the earth ? or who hath disposed the whole world ?

Elihu proceedeth in the prooffe of this poynt, (the vindication of the righteoufnesse of God) with a strong asseveration.

Vers. 12. *Yea, surely.*

There is a mighty force of affirmation, in the originall words, אמן ואמן we may parallel them, with those assertive speeches frequently used by our Saviour Jesus Christ in the Gospel, *Amen, Amen, Verily, verily I say unto you* ; *Yea surely*, is as much as *verily, verily* ; as if Elihu had sayd, *There is no question to be made of what I affirme, that God is righteous, or will not doe wickedly* ; as the Apostle writ to Timothy about the great mystery of the Gospel, *God manifested in the flesh*, (1 Tim: 3. 16.) *without controversie great* (or, as the word imports, confessedly on all hands, great) *is the mystery of Godlinesse* ; so here Elihu might speak to Job, *This is a truth beyond dispute or controversie, an unquestionable truth, and such a truth that, if once confessed, will quickly determine all the Questions, which are depending between you and me.* There are some *Master-truths, ruling truths* ; such a one is this in the text, *Yea surely, or undoubtedly, God will not doe wickedly.*

Hence note.

It becomes us to grow up into highest confidences, about the truths of God, especially about the truth and Justice of God.

We should not be as meteors hanging in the ayre, speaking with hesitation, possibly it is so, peradventure it is true ; but (as the Apostle directs the Colossians, Chap. 2. 3.) *We must labour to grow up unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding* ; as there is a full assurance of faith in believing, & of hope in waiting or expecting, so also of understanding in apprehending the things of God. We should be (in a sense) *Masters of truth* ; and then

D d d d

we

we are so indeed, when truth hath fully mastered us, and prevailed upon both our judgement and affections, and we are led captive by light to the love and obedience of it. We have cause to bewaile those (much more have they cause to bewaile themselves) who are but Scepticks or Questionests in Religion, never coming to a poynt, nor able (after a due making up of their thoughts) to say, *Thus it is, and by this we will abide*, as *Elihu* did in the then present case, delivering himselfe confidently, *yea surely, or verily, verily,*

God will not doe wickedly.

To cleare the meaning in this Negative assertion, we must take in the highest affirmatives of the holinesse and Justice, of the righteousness, truth, and faithfulness of God; For it sounds like a flat and low commendation of God, to say, *he will not doe wickedly*; for so it may be sayd of every honest man, *He will not do wickedly*; but seeing in this Negative commendation given by man to God (as in all the Negative commandements given by God to man) all affirmatives are to be understood; what can be sayd more to or more sound out his praise and glory then this?

God will not doe wickedly?

וְהָיָה עִי
est aliquando impi-
um pronuncia-
re, condemna-
re; aliquando
vero impiè a-
gere vel inique
quippiam face-
re. Merc.

The word here used for *doing wickedly*, signifies two things; First, to pronounce any person wicked; and Secondly, to doe any thing which is wicked; both these often meete together. For in many cases to pronounce a person wicked, is to doe a wicked thing; he that condemneth a just person, pronounceth him wicked, and what thing can be done more wickedly then that? Some take the word in that sence here, as a deniall that God either hath done, or ever will condemne the innocent. There are two things wherein men doe very wickedly, with respect to the persons of men, both which the Lord abhorres. First, when they condemne the innocent. Secondly, when they acquit or cleare the guilty. The former way of doing wickedly, is chiefly removed from God here by *Elihu*, as the latter is directly and expressly by himselfe (*Exod. 34. 7.*) *The Lord, the Lord, &c. that will by no meanes cleare the guilty.* To pronounce a guilty person innocent, or an innocent person guilty, if ignorantly done, is a great piece of weaknesse, and if knowingly done, is a great piece of wickednesse.

Yet,

Yet, because the latter part of the verse speakes particularly to cleare God from wrong Judgement, therefore, I conceive, we may better expound this former part of it more largely, as a generall deniall of any evill act whatsoever, done by God. *Surely God will not doe wickedly,*

Neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement.

The Almighty, who hath power to doe what he will, hath no will to doe this evill. He will not *pervert Judgement*. The word *pervert* *detorque-
bit curvabit.* signifies both to pervert and subvert, as also to bow, wrest, or put out of order, to mingle or blend those things together, which should be for ever separated, or, as we say, to mingle heaven and earth, yea heaven and hell together; to doe they who mingle good and ill, right and wrong together. To *pervert Judgement*, is, to doe all this, for then (which *Abraham* assured himselfe was farre from God, *Gen. 18. 25.*) *The righteous are as the wicked*, that is, the righteous fare as ill as the wicked, or the wicked fare as well as the righteous. But *the Almighty will not pervert Judgement*, that is, the right which belongs to any man, and therefore, he will doe every man right. We had the same position in termes (*Chap. 8. 3d*) and we have had this whole verse equivalently in the 10th of this Chapter, where *Elihu* sayd, *Far be it from God, that he should doe wickednesse, and from the Almighty, that he should commit iniquity.* Here, only one verse intervening, *El hu* reports and repeats the same matter againe; but it is no needlesse or vaine repetition, for which Christ reprov'd the prayer of the Heathens (*Math. 6. 7.*) there are many repetitions in Scripture, but not one vaine one; how often soever the same truth is repeated there, it hath its weight and use, not only as it is still a truth, but as it is a truth repeated. And therefore I shall give a three-fold reason why this truth is here againe repeated, which will also lead us to a fuller improvement of it.

First, Because this truth is (as it were) the hinge upon which the whole controversie between *Job* and *Elihu* is turned. *Job* was unsatisfied because he was so ill handled, and therefore *Elihu* tells him often that God is righteous, and that he will not wrong any man. Hereby giving *Job* to understand, that God had done him nothing, or done nothing to him, but right. Such grand swaying controlling truths should be often, and can scarce be too often repeated.

Secondly, *Elihu* repeated this againe, because 'tis such a truth, as no man can too much, no nor enough weigh and consider the value and worth of it. Now, that which cannot be too often nor too much thought of, cannot (if rules of prudence be observed) be too much or too often spoken of. There is scarce any man who hath not sometimes at least indirectly and obliquely some hard thoughts of the proceedings of God, either in reference to himselfe or to others ; Nor is there any thing that we have more temptations about, then that, surely, we are not in all things rightly dealt with, and that the dispensations of God are not so even, as they might. These sinfull suspicions are dayly moving and fluctuating in the heart of man, and therefore this opposite principle ought to be fastened and fixed there to the utmost, that the will and workes of God are all just and righteous, yea that his will is the rule of all righteous workings; or, that as whatsoever is done in this world, is done by the disposure of God, so God (though the thing be evill and unjust) is just and good in the disposure of it. Therefore unlesse we resist or contradict the will of God, we must say, whatsoever comes to passe, comes righteously to passe, because it comes to passe by the determinate will and counsell of God.

Thirdly, *Elihu* repeates this assertion, that he might the more commodiously make his transition or passage to the matter following, and prosecute it with greater successe. And therefore I shall not stay longer upon those words, only.

Note.

First, This great truth, that *God will not doe wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement*, convinceth those, not only of injudiciousnesse, but of wickednesse, who, though they are ready to acknowledge in generall, *God is just*, yet as to those particular providences, which concerne them, or wherewith themselves are pincht, doe not, cannot acquiesce and rest in the will of God, with freedome and satisfaction. That which is just should not displease us, though (in it selfe) it be very bitter and unpleasant to us.

Secondly, This truth is a ground of comfort to all the people of God, who are under heavy pressures from this evill world, or who receive little reward or encouragement (as to sense) from the good hand of God. Such are apt to say with the kingly Prophet.

phet (*Psal. 73. 13, 14.*) *Verily in vaine have we cleansed our heart, and washed our hands in innocency, for all the day long have we been plagued, and chastened every morning.* David was under a temptation when he was under hatches, he could hardly perceive it worth the while to take paines in cleansing and washing either heart or hand while God was so constant and frequent in correcting and chastening him with so heavy a hand. Yet David soone after recovered out of this temptation, and concluded the Psalm, with this particular assurance, (*v. 28.*) *It is good for me to draw neere to God,* as he had begun it (*v. 1.*) with a generall assurance, *Truely God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a cleane heart.* God is good to those who have a cleane heart, even when they are in the greatest sufferance of evill, and therefore they who are cleane hearted, have no reason at any time to say, nor shall they long say, they have cleansed their heart in vaine. Though now they smart, yet in due season they shall be well rewarded for their washing. *The Judgements of God are such, as no man can fully comprehend, such as no man can justly reprehend.* The Almighty will not pervert Judgement.

Those foure things which cause men to pervert Judgement, are at the furthest distance, or remove from God; whereof the first is envie at the good condition of others. The second is groundlesse and unreasonable love or hatred of their persons. The third is feare of frownes from those that are great, or feare of after-claps; Many are deterr'd from giving but a just measure, either of reward to good men, or punishment to evill men, lest themselves should receive hard measure from those who like neither. The fourth is hope of gaine, or their private advantage. For as some pervert Judgement for bribes already received, so others for bribes promised, or upon expectation of some future favours. Now God (*I say*) is infinitely above these foure, and all other imaginable by-respects, upon which Judgement is perverted every day, by the sons of men. God is above all envy, yea above all that hatred or love which perverts Judgement; he is above all feare of evill, and hope of good. God hath nothing to feare, seeing none can reach him, much lesse hurt him; neither hath he any thing at all to hope for, seeing he is in the full possession of all happinesse and blessednesse, that is, of himselfe. Why then, or upon what account should the Almighty pervert Judgement?

Judgement? ſo that, if at any time, we have any unbecoming thoughts of the Juſtice of God, either that he afflicts the good without reaſon, or proſpers the wicked againſt it; all this ariſeth from our ignorance, or the ſhortneſſe of our ſight. We have not a full or perfect proſpect of things, we ſee but a little way backward, we are not wiſe to compare what's paſt with what's preſent, nor can we at all infallibly foreſee any thing future, or diſcerne what ſhall be. Whereas God at once hath all things before him, he ſeeth what is paſt as well as what is preſent, and what ſhall be hereafter, as well as what hath been, and ſo the compleatneſſe and indefectibility of his owne Juſtice in all. And when we in the great day ſhall ſee all the workes of God in the world brought and preſented together as in one view, we ſhall then ſay from the evidence of ſight, as now we ought from the evidence of faith, that the Almighty hath not in any one thing perverted Judgement. And therefore the Apoſtle doth moſt excellently and appoſitely call that day, *The day of the revelation of the righteous judgement of God* (Rom: 2. 5.)

Elihu having ſtrongly aſſerted, with a yea ſurely, that, *the Almighty will not pervert Judgement*, yet ſtayeth not in a bare (though ſo ſtrong an) aſſertion, (which he might) but gives us the prooſe and confirmation of it; as he hath denied that God will, ſo he proveth by undeniable arguments, that God will not doe wickedly, that the Almighty will not pervert Judgement. And this he doth in the next or 13th verſe; and the two that follow.

Verſ. 13. *Who hath given him a charge over the earth? or who hath diſpoſed the whole world?*

Theſe words, (as was intimated before) are an argument proving that God neither hath nor can doe wrong; That (as to the caſe in hand) he had not done *Job* wrong, yea, that, (as to all caſes) he can wrong no man. This argument is grounded upon the ſoveraignty, ſupremacy, or abſolute authority of God over all men. The ſumme and force of it may be gathered up into this forme.

He cannot doe injuſtice to any, who of right hath an abſolute power ariſing from and reſiding in himſelfe to doe what he will with or towards all men.

But God hath such a power, Therefore he cannot doe any-injustice. That, God hath such an absolute power arising from and residing in himselfe *Elihu* proves by a kind of Challenge.

Who hath given him a Charge over the earth ?

Produce the man, let him shew his face, if he dareth. It is an exprestion of the same importance with that of the Apostle (*Rom: 8. 33.*) *Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect ?* let us see the man, let us see the devill, that shall so lay any thing to the Charge of Gods Elect, as to prevaile in his Charge; 'tis also like that other triumphant query, in the same Chapter (*v. 31.*) *If God be with us, who can be against us ?* That is, who can be so against us as to hurt us, or carry the day against us ? Thus here ; *Who hath given him a Charge over the world ?* let us see who ; As if he had sayd, *Are there any above God, from whom he deriveth his power ? Or have any committed the Government of the earth to him as his trust and charge, for the manningment whereof he is to be accountable unto them ? Surely no. And if no, then either God is just, or all the world must be in confusion or under oppression without any redresse or remedy.* Mr Broughton renders, *Who before him looked to the earth ?* We say, *who hath given him a Charge over the earth ?* The ordinary signification of the word, is to visit, and that

פקדו sequens
sumitur pro
habere iuxta
morem Syriacū
hinc פקדים
praefecti.
Merc:

First, In a way of favour, to see what others want (so we visit the poore) or how they doe, so we usually visit the sick, and sometimes those that are well in health.

Secondly, It signifieth to visit in a way of judgement, or to punish those that have done amisse. Thus the Lord threatens to visit (that is, to punish) the iniquity of the fathers upon the children (*Exod: 20. 5.*)

Thirdly, The word signifieth to command, to issue out orders, to give a charge. This signification of the word is very frequent both in Scripture, and in dayly use. Visitors (we know) have power of Government ; yea they have power over Governours to order and give them a charge, that they doe, or to examine whether they have done the duty of their place. In this latter sense, we render it here, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth ?* And so we read it (*2 Chron: 36. 23.*) *Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, all the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven*

heaven given me. And he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah; who is there among you of all his people, The Lord his God be with him, and let him goe up. God hath charged me (saith Cyrus) or he hath made that my businesse, a businesse incumbent upon me, to build him a house in Jerusalem, that is, to further the worke, to give the Jewes leave to build the Temple of Jerusalem; God hath charged me with this great trust, and I am willing to answer it. The same thing is recorded, almost in the same words (Ezra 1. 2.) Thus saith Cyrus King of Persia, the Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he hath Charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. God giveth Princes their Charge, supream sovereign Princes, yea he giveth inferiour Princes and Magistrates, their Charge; but (saith Elihu) *Who hath given him a Charge?* Certainly, no man. There is yet a twofold reading of this former part of the verse, both considerable.

First, Thus; *Who for him hath visited the earth?* As if it had been sayd, Hath God set any to visit, or to look to the earth for him, as if himselfe stood by and did nothing; God useth the power of man, he sets up Magistrates to worke for him; but he never puts the worke out of his owne hand, nor doth he need any hand to helpe him in that worke, though he useth many: and though he saith, *By me* (yea for me) *Kings reigne*, yet we may say with Elihu (in the notion now exprest) *Who for him hath visited the earth?* that's a good reading.

Secondly, *Who over him doth visit the earth?* Is God any mans Vicegerent? is he a Lord Deputy, or a Viceroy? No, there is no man visits the earth over him, for, (as we render clearely) *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth?* As if he had sayd, *If God be an unjust Judge, is there any superiour Judge to whom we may appeale for remedy or redresse of our injuries?* Who over him visiteth, or, *who hath given him a charge over*

the earth.

That is, over the inhabitants of the earth, or over the affayres of the earth. The Earth, by a Synecdoche of the Continent for the matter contained, is here put for all persons and transactions over the face of the whole earth. Who hath layd that great Charge, the disposall of all things and people in the earth upon God?

God ? surely no man on earth, no Angel in heaven, nor all of them put together. How should God derive a governing power from them, who derive their very power of being from him ? He governes in his owne right, not by commission or deputation. We have the same poynt affirmed at the 36th Chapter of this Booke, v. 23 d, *Who hath enjoyed him his way ?* God knoweth and taketh his owne way, no man sheweth, much lesse commandeth him his way ; *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth ?*

Or who hath disposed the whole world ?

This Question, as the former, contains a Negation ; no Creature, none besides God hath disposed of the whole world, or of all of the world. Mr Broughton renders, *Who hath settled all the dwelt land ?* The word which we translate *disposed*, signifies to place with a kind of art, exactly, orderly, carefully ; *Who hath thus disposed the whole world ?* There is a double disposition of the world.

□□ posuit arte, cura, et ordine, quod est disposit.

First, In Creation ; who hath disposed, joyned, and put the whole world in frame ? who hath marshall'd the severall parts of the world as they now stand like the Host of God ? The world as created is expressed in the Greek by *beauty and order* ; before God perfected the creation, all was a confused heape without *forme and voyd* ; But that rude indigested matter was drawne forth in the severall works of that six-dayes Creation, into a most beautifull forme and order. Thus God once disposed all the world by Creation.

Secondly, God dayly disposeth the world by providence ; And that's the disposure which this text especially speakes of ; *Who hath disposed* (in a providentiall way) *the whole world ?* The word rendred *world*, properly signifies, *the habitable world* ; we find it opposed to the wilderness or desert (*Isa: 14. 17.*) where few or none inhabite. That word is very significantly used here for the world, because the habitable part of the world, or where men inhabite, are the stages on which the providences of God appear, and act most eminently & convincingly ; *Who hath disposed of the habitable world ?* which the Greekes call, *The house of abiding* : Mr Broughton, *The dwelt land*, that is, the land wherein men dwell.

למנוחא habitabilis, circumque vocant. i. e. homines degentes in orbis habitabili. Pisc:

Againe, As the earth, before, is put for the inhabitants and occurrences of the earth ; so whatsoever passeth, or is brought to

paſſe in the world, is here called the world. *Who hath diſpoſed the whole world?* He that made the whole world, diſpoſeth of the whole world, providence followeth Creation.

But ſome may ſay, Is this a good Argument to prove that God is juſt, becauſe he hath the ſupreame power over all the world? Will it follow, that he adminiſtrett all things rightly, becauſe he hath a right to adminiſter all things? There ſeemes but little of Argument in this, (may ſome ſay) many have a great deale of power, who abuſe it, and they that have moſt power, uſually abuſe it moſt, and make it but a ſervant to their luſts and paſſions; therefore how is it a prooſe, that the Lord is righteous and will doe no iniquity, becauſe he hath the power of all things in his hand, or is Lord over all?

I anſwer. This is a ſtrong argument, and (as I remember a good Author calls it) *a peremptory argument*, which can have no deniall. The Lord is righteous, becauſe he is Lord over all; he is not King of ſome corner of the World; he is not King of the whole World by election or vote of the World, he is not choſen at all, much leſſe (as many have been) by evill means and wicked combinations; God is the ſupreame governer of all the world by naturall right not choyce; yet not (as ſome Princes are) by naturall right of ſucceſſion inheriting after a mortall father; but by the naturall right of creation, himſelf being the father of that world over which he is a governour. The Originall of Gods power is ſtated in himſelf; The eternall being of God, and his ſupreame authority are inſeparable.

Yea, God is not only thus ſupreame in adminiſtring Juſtice; but he is the ſumme or fullneſſe of Law and Juſtice, and therefore cannot pervert it. He whoſe power and goodneſſe gave the world its being, how ſhould he act any thing which is not good in the exerciſe of his power over the World! Injuſtice is the breach of a Law, but how can God break a Law who is the ſource and fountaine of all righteous Lawes? who then ſhall dare to ſuſpect God of injuſtice, or require a reaſon why he doth this or that in the world, which himſelf hath made? yea, who hath not reaſon to admire and proclaime infinite goodneſſe mixt with abſolute power, as in his making ſo in his ruling the world? For whoſe ſake or for fear of whom ſhould he pervert Juſtice, who hath all men alike under his power?

Earthly

Earthly Judges may erre in judgment, but the Judge of all the earth cannot. God cannot doe injustice through ignorance or mistake ; for he is omniscient and knoweth all things ; nor can he have a will to doe unjustly, seeing his will is altogether just, and the rule or measure of all things that are just. As therefore he is not an idle Idol-god but most active in governing the World ; so he is infinitely above the least failer in the government of it. The Sun shall sooner be turned into a cloud, and the morning light darken the earth, then any unrighteousnesse proceed from God ; yea, *when clouds and darknesse are round about him* (that is, when we by reason either of the obscurenesse or afflictivenesse of his dispensations can give no account of them, yet even then) *righteousnesse and judgment are the habitation of his Throne* ; that is, his governing power abides unmoveably, or constantly (as in a habitation) within that blessed line and glorious spheare of righteousness. So then, the reasoning of *Elihu* from the universality and independency of the governing power of God, to the righteousness and equity of his government is not only probable, but demonstrative and unanswerable. He is alike mighty as the sole creator, and just as the supream moderator of the World. If any man will presume to charge God with perverting judgment in governing the earth, that man saith in effect that he hath given God a charge over the earth ; And if any man be so impiously and impudently presumptuous as to say that, let him come forth and answer this as peremptorily as truly denying question of *Elihu* ; *who hath given him a charge over the earth ?*

Ipse quam potens est conditor tam pius est moderator.
Hieron.

Hence Observe.

The power of God is a primitive or underived power.

His power is of himselfe ; yea, his power is himself ; God doth not rule by Commission or Deputation, all ruling power is fundamentally in him, as also the rule of that power, both which in God are one. Jesus Christ as Mediatour rules by Commission ; *All things* (saith he, *Math: 11. 27.*) *are delivered to me of my Father.* And againe, the Baptist gave this testimony of him (*John 3. 35.*) *The father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.* Jesus Christ as Mediator receives his Charge from the Father, and he hath received a Charge over the whole earth, as Mediator. But consider him as God, so the government of the

world is fundamentally and essentially in him also. It is the highest honour of an earthly Prince, *when* (as it is sayd of the *Chaldeans* (*Hab: 1. 7.*) *their Judgement and their dignity proceedeth of themselves* ; that is, when they rule in their owne right, not in the right or by the designement of any other. How high then is the honour of God, who ruleth not only over all the people, but over all the Princes of the earth, his Judgement and dignity proceeding purely from himselve !

Secondly, As the power of God is underived or proceeds only from himselve ; so the power of God is absolute and unlimited. His is in the strictest sence imaginable *supreame power*. Heathenish *Nebuchadnezzar* confessed this truth (*Dan: 4. 35.*) *Before him* (that is, before God) *all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doth according to his will in the Armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, and say to him what dost thou ?* There's absolute power, none can say, that is, none may presume to say to him, *What doest thou ?* no man ought to question, much lesse to quarrell at the determinations of God, whether concerning persons or nations ; 'tis his right or prerogative to doe what he will ; and how much soever he acts by prerogative, he will doe only that which is right ; we may consider the absolute supremacy of God in a five-fold exercise of power.

First, In commanding ; He commandeth what he pleaseth to be done ; nor may his commands be disputed ; they must be obeyed, because his.

Secondly, In prohibiting he forbiddeth whatsoever displeaseth him to be done. And how pleasing, how right soever any thing is in our eyes, yet if he forbiddeth it, we must for ever forbear it. We all know by our owne smart how dangerous it is to eate of a forbidden Tree.

Thirdly, In suffering, I meane it not of any suffering evill in himselve (God is infinitely above that) but of his suffering others to doe evill, or of his suffering any evill to be done. God may and doth permit, that which is nought, wicked, and unrighteous to be done in the world ; and yet himselve remains altogether holy, righteous, just, and good. This is a great part of the transcendency of his power.

Fourthly, In rewarding ; God hath absolute power, to reward ;

ward ; First, whom he will ; Secondly, for what he will ; Thirdly, in what kind he will ; Fourthly, in what degree or measure he will ; Fifthly, for how long he will, he can give (which none of the Princes of the earth can) everlasting rewards.

Fifthly, In punishing ; God hath absolute power to punish, and the absoluteness of his power in punishing, may be exemplified in those five particulars, wherein his power of rewarding (in the former paragraph) was. In all these things we see the unlimitedness of the power of God, *Who hath given him a Charge over the earth ? or who hath disposed the whole world ?* Himselfe alone doth it, and he doth it of himselfe. And for as much as there is such a supremacy, such an absoluteness of power in God, take these three inferences from it.

First, How freely should we yeild our selves to the commands of God, not questioning this as unequall, nor saying that is hard ? we are more apt to find fault with the work which God requires us to doe, then to remember that it is a great fault not to doe it. The heart of man naturally riseth against the will of God ; *It is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be* (Rom: 8. 7.) the wisdom of the flesh thinks there is some unrighteousnesse, at least some unreasonableness or rigour in the commands of God, and therefore such wise men hope they have reason on their side if they omit them or act against them. Any man will (at least he cannot but confesse he ought to) be subject unto that which is equall and right. Man hath no colour to disobey, till he hath put some blot upon the command. And seeing the commands of him who hath the charge over all the earth in himselfe and from himselfe, cannot possibly have any blot or defect in them, let us take heed we be not found disobeying.

Secondly, Seeing God hath the Charge of all the earth, we should as readily submit to his dispensations, works and dealings, as to his commands. The Jewes of old complained (*Ezek: 18. 29.*) *The way of the Lord is not equall* ; They did even tell him to his face, his wayes were not equall, and therefore they would not submit. The Church in captivity spake well (*Lam: 3. 28.*) *Out of the mouth of the most high proceedeth not evill and good* ; that is, whatsoever the Lord hath pronounced to doe or hath done concerning us, is morally good and not evill, though it be penally evill. and not good. *Eli* spake wel also to this poynt

(*1 Sam:*

(1 Sam: 3. 18.) *It is the Lord, let him doe what seemes good in his owne eyes* ; yet the thing which God was about to doe, was such (v. 11.) as at which, *both the eares of every one that heard it should tingle*. To have the heart quiet while the eares tingle, is pure submission. And any unquietness or murrainings at the dealings of God, whether respecting our persons or our families, Churches, or Nations, are in some degree rebellions against the soveraigne power of God.

Thirdly, If the Lord be supream, and have the charge over all the earth, then let us set him up as supream in all things, let his ends be above our ends ; let us designe God in all we doe ; He who is over all, ought to be honoured by all. All our actions as so many lines ought to center in his honour, who is the Center of power. *Of him and through him and to him are all things*, saith the Apostle (Rom: 11. 36.) Because all things are *of him*, creating them, and *through him*, governing them, therefore all things should be *to him*, that is, all persons should in all things they doe, yea in all things that are done, ayme at and designe his glory, as the Apostle expressly concludeth the verse before cited ; *To whom be glory for ever.*

Thirdly, Whereas it is sayd, *who hath given him a Charge over the earth ? or who hath disposed* (not a part, or parcell, or canton, or corner of, but) *the whole world ?*

Observe.

The power of God is an universall power.

It is extended throughout the world, to every patch and inch of it. What David saith of the Sun (Psal: 19. 6.) *His going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heate thereof.* The same may we say of the circuit of Gods power, there is nothing hid from, nor set beyond it. There is a four-fold universality of the power of God.

First, In regard of persons (Psal: 97. 9.) *Thou Lord art high above all the earth, thou art exalted farre above all Gods* ; that is, above the Kings and powers of the earth ; whom the Scripture calleth Gods. If God hath a power over the Kings of the earth, then surely over the people of the earth ; yea God is not only exalted and farre exalted above this or that God or King, but above them all ; This is a supremacy with utmost universality.

Secondly,

Secondly, His power is universall, as to places, and nations; some places claime priviledge, and are exempt from the jurisdiction of Princes, if obnoxious persons get thither, they are free from the course of the Law. There were *Cities of refuge* among the *Jewes*, and *Sanctuaries* in the dayes of old among us, where evill-doers could not be toucht. But the power of the Lord reacheth all places, even to the hornes of the Altar (*Psal. 83. 18.*) *Thou whose name alone is Jehovah, art most high over all the earth.*

Thirdly, His power is universall, as in all places, so over all things; it extends to the starrs of heaven, and to the fowles of the ayre, to the beasts of the earth, and to the fishes of the Sea; to whatsoever moves in this world; they are all at the command of God, if he doth but speake, they run and execute his will.

Fourthly, His power is universall, in reference to time; 'tis never out, nor shall ever end; he is *King immortall*, and *King eternall*, his Kingdome is an everlasting Kingdome. The power of God is an universall power in all these considerations: His power of Governing is of the same extent, as his power of creating was; that which he created at once, he governes alwayes. He did not set up the fabrick of this world, and then leave it to it selfe, but he preserveth and ordereth all things in it. The wel-being, the orderly being of the creature, is as much of God as the being of it.

Some say, God made the world at first, and set all the wheelles of it a-going, but now things goe on by chance, by fortune, or by accident, at least particular events are not under his government, but come to passe as the wisdom or folly of men is most active in the production of them.

I answer, to set up blind fortune, and chance, yea or the wit and policy of man, as governing the world, is to set up other Gods in the world; if chance and fortune, or the wit of man, governe any part of the world, then they had a part in making the world. If you divide one power, you divide the other. For those invisable things of God, his eternal power and God-head, are as much or as evidently seene, in the things which are done, as in the things which are made. 'Tis true indeed God useth many hands in governing, ordering, and disposing the things of this world. The Princes of this world, are eminently his hand, but God doth

*Non eget alie-
ria adiutorijs
ad regendum
mundum qui
non eguit ad
faciendum.*

Greg: Lib: 24.
Moral: ca: 26.

not use any power in governing this world, to diminish his owne, nor doth he withdraw his owne power, what power soever he useth; 'tis his power that acts effectually, and gives successe in the acting of all power. It was sayd to that King who prided himselfe in what he had done in the world; *Shall the Axe boast it selfe against him that heareth therewith, or shall the saw magnifie it selfe against him that shakerh it?* (*Ila: 10. 15.*) As if the Lord had sayd to that proud Assyrian Prince, *Doest thou looke upon thy selfe, as if thou didst all, and governeest all? thou art no more in the governing the world* (though the chiefe earthly Governour of all the world) *then an Axe is in the hand of him that useth it; And though the artificer cannot doe his worke without an Axe, though he cannot divide his Timber without a saw, yet I the Lord am able to doe my worke without thee.* At best and most, men are but instruments in the hand of God; and he serves his owne turne by men, not to signifie that he cannot worke without them, nor that his worke is done either with more ease to himselfe, or more successe as to it selfe by their helpe (he is not so weake as to need helpe, nor is at all strengthened by the helpe he useth) but only to shew that as he hath the command of, so he hath a use for every creature (*Isa: 7. 18.*) *The Lord shall hisse for the fly;* if God doe but hisse to the fly, or any creature on earth, yea to the devills in hell, they are at his call, and doe his will, though they intend it nor. Further; though God can doe all himselfe, yet he useth various instruments, that he may indear man to man, or that no man may say, he hath no need of another. Thus the Apostle argues (*1 Cor: 12. 21.*) *The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor againe the head to the feete, I have no need of you.* Surely then the feete cannot say to the head, we have no need of thee, nor the hand to the eye, we have no need of thee. That, Creatures may shew their love to one another, and see their need of one another, God is pleased to give them a charge to worke and dispose of the things in the world, though the charge and disposure of the whole world be in himselfe.

Now if the Lord be thus invested with all power originally and essentially, then I would mind those who are in power of two things, and those that are under power of one.

First, *Let them that have power remember to use it for God.* They that have but family power should use it for God; how much
more

more they that have power over nations. (*Psal: 2. 10, 11.*) *Be wise now therefore O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the earth, serve the Lord with feare, and rejoyce with trembling.* When he saith, *serve the Lord with feare*, I suppose he doth not intend it in that notion of *servieng the Lord*, as serving him denotes our holiness and obedience in generall; but when he saith, *serve the Lord with feare*, his meaning is, serve him so in the exercise of your power, and in your places, as you have power in your hand, as you have received a Charge or Commission from God over this or that part of the earth, so serve him with feare, in the use of that power. As man ought in all the service of God to be in a holy feare, so especially when he serveth God in the administration of power, because all power is from God. And therefore (which is the next thing I would hence mind those of that are in power)

Secondly, Remember, The day of account must needs be a sad day to those who abuse their power to the oppression of man; and chiefly to those who turne their power against God; that is, against the wayes and truths of God, against the servants and people of God, against the ends and designs of God. God will call such as have had any charge over the earth to an account, and let them who either of these wayes abuse their power, consider whether such accounts will passe as they must give. Surely when the day of the Lord shall be upon such *Oakes and Cedars*, upon *such mountaines and hills*, as the Prophet (*Isa: 2. 13, 14.*) calleth the Powers and Princes of this world, they will even be forced (as he describes them at the 19th verse) *to goe into the holes of the rockes, and into the caves of the earth, for feare of the Lord, and for the glory of his Majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.* It is bad to be abused by the power of man, but 'tis worst for that man who abuseth his power. *Thy terriblenesse hath deceived thee* (saith the Prophet, *Jer: 49. 16.*) *and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocke, that holdest the height of the hill;* that is, thou that art in high power, and also holdest thy height, thou art deceived, and thy terriblenesse hath deceived thee; because thou hast been able to terrifie many with thy power, therefore thou hast presumed that none shall ever terrifie or trouble thee; This vaine confidence hath deceived thee, for (as it followeth in the latter part of that verse) *though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the Eagle, I will bring thee*
F f f f
downe

downe from thence, saith the Lord; that is, I will bring thee to a reckoning for terrifying those with thy power whom thou shouldest have protected by it.

Lastly, This is matter of great Comfort to all good men who are under power; though they are wronged and oppressed by the power of man, this may support them, God hath power over all the earth, he hath the Charge, and he will see them righted one time or other. (*Eccles: 3. 16, 17.*) *Moreover, I saw under the Sun the place of Judgement, that wickednesse was there, and the place of righteousnesse, that iniquity was there; I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked, for there is a time for every purpose and for every worke.* And if for every purpose and worke, then surely for this, the reviewing of the unrighteous judgements of the Princes and Powers of the earth, who hold the places of Judgement and righteousnesse; to punish the perverting of which, the Lord who is Prince of the Kings of the earth often *powreth contempt upon Princes* (*Psal: 107. 40, 41.*) *and causeth them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way; yet setteth he the poore on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flocke.* For as the Holy Ghost saith (*Psal: 138. 6, 7.*) *Though the Lord be high, yet hath he regard to the lowly, but the proud he knoweth a farr of; hereupon his faith riseth up to a full assurance.* in the next verse; *Though I walke in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me: thou shalt stretch forth thine hand against the wrath of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.*

Thus much for the argument here used, the Lord is righteous, for he hath all power in his hand; and he hath no reason upon any account in the world to pervert power; yea for him to doe any thing that is not righteous, were to act against himselfe, even against his owne being and blessednesse, who is God blessed for evermore.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 14, 15.

If he set his heart upon man : if he gather unto himselfe his spirit and his breath.

All flesh shall perishe together, and man shall turn to his dust.

IN these two verses *Elihu* perfects the prooffe of what he lately asserted, that *God is just, and that there is no unrighteousnesse in him* (v. 12.) *yea surely God will not doe wickedly, neither will the Almighty pervert Judgement* ; For, as *Moses* in his dying song describes him ; *He is the rocke, his worke is perfect ; for all his wayes are judgement ; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he.* The first argument for the confirmation of this was opened at the 13 verse. And it was grounded upon the absoluteness and universality of his dominion : Here we have a second argument from the sweet temperament of his power and goodness. *God hath power enough in his hand at once to destroy all flesh, and to command every man back into the dust.* But he doth not thus put out his power. We live and live comfortably ; we enjoy not only our lives, but many mercies of this life ; and therefore surely *God doth not deale rigorously, much lesse unrighteously with man.* *He that doth all men good beyond their deserts, will not punish any man beyond his demerits.* He that doth not exercise his power alwayes where he might, will not exercise it all where he ought not. That's the summe and scope of *Elihu* in the context under hand.

Vers. 14. *If he set his heart upon man.*

To *set the heart* upon any thing or person, is a Scripture expression, often used, noting more then barely to think upon or mind both or either. It signifieth to have deep and serious thoughts, to think with consideration and attention, yea with some height and heat of affection. And all this whether that thing which the heart and affections are set upon, please or displease, be comfortable or grievous ; for both love and hatred, hope and feare, are thoughtfull of, and sollicitous about their severall objects. Hence

that caution (*Psal: 62. 10.*) *If riches encrease set not your heart upon them*; we naturally love riches, and therefore as naturally spend many thoughts, both how to get and how to keepe them. If a man have riches, or an encrease of riches, it is not unlawfull for him to thinke of them, (yet we should be as sparing of our thoughts that way as can be, our thoughts and the bent of our soules should alwayes be upon God) but that which the Psalmist forbids is the setting of our hearts; As if he had sayd, *Let not your thoughts stay or dwell there*. Riches are themselves transient things, therefore they should have but our transient thoughts. *Set not your hearts upon them*, for they may quickly be unsetled. *Samuel* bespake *Saul* in the same language about a worldly concernment, when he went out to seek his fathers Asses (*1 Sam: 9. 20.*) *Set not thy mind on them*. 'Tis like *Saul* was over-burdened with this thought, What's become of, or what shall I doe for my fathers Asses? Be not solicitous about them, saith *Samuel*, greater things are towards thee. *Abigail* useth the same forme of speaking to *David* concerning *Naball* (*1 Sam: 25. 23.*) *Let not my Lord regard this man of Belial*, lay not to heart what *Nabal* hath sayd or done. Thus *Jonadab* took off *Dauids* feare, that in one day he had been deprived of all his Sons (*2 Sam: 13. 33.*) *Now therefore let not my Lord the King take the thing to heart, to think that all the Kings sons are dead, for Amnon only is dead*. We are as apt to set our heart upon our losses, as upon our enjoyments. And to shew how little *Pharoah* regarded the heavy hand of God upon him, it is sayd (after *Moses* had turned all the waters that were in the river to blood, *Exod: 7. 23.*) *And Pharoah turned and went into his house, neither did set his heart to this also*; That is, he slighted what God had done. Let God speak, and strike once and againe, yea a third time, yet hard-hearted men doe not lay it to heart, nor set their heart upon it. Thus here in the Affirmative it is sayd of God, *If he set his heart upon man*; that is, if he doe but intend and mind this matter, he can quickly bring it about, even the perishing of all flesh.

Apponere cor est velle, discernere, constituere. q. d. Si ei sum animi suggererit. Vatabl.

If he set his heart upon man.

Valer contra. Si poneret contra eum cor suum. i.e. si sibi The text is rendered also, *If he set his heart against man*: The Hebrew particle signifieth not only upon, but against (*Amos 7. 16.*) *Prophesie not against Israel, &c.* And the generall sence of that reading may be given two wayes.

First,

First, *If he ſet his heart againſt man*, to enquire ſtrictly into his life and wayes, if he ſhould critically mark all his errours, or faults, and to reſolve to proceed againſt him, he might ſoon make an end of him, as it followeth in the next verſe. As the ſtrongeſt, ſo the beſt and holieſt of men are not able to ſtand before him. Thus the words are an answer given by *Elihu* to that frequent request of *Job*, that God would let him come near to judgement; and hear his cauſe argued and debated before him, even at his Bar; but ſaith *Elihu* (according to this ſence) If God ſet his heart againſt man, if he doth but ſtrictly enquire into his condition, courſe, and converſation, it would be ſad with him; *All men muſt periſh*. Thoſe two places in the *Pſalmes* answer this interpretation fully, (*Pſal. 130. 3.*) *If thou Lord ſhouldeſt mark iniquities, O Lord, who ſhould ſtand?* That is, No man ſhall; We cannot ſtand in our righteouſneſs before God, how then ſhall we ſtand in our iniquities! And therefore the ſecond Text deprecates the Lord's ſevere enquiry into our pureſt and moſt perfect ſervices, (*Pſal. 143. 2.*) *Enter not into judgement with thy ſervant, for in thy ſight ſhall no man living be juſtified.*

Secondly, *If he ſet his heart againſt man*, that is, If he have a general purpoſe to deſtroy and ruine him by his abſolute Sovereignty, he can eaſily do it; what God hath a minde to do, or only willeth it to be done, he hath power enough to do it: He can make any man miſerable, and not only ſtrip him of the comforts of this life, but of his life too: And as he hath power enough, if he would uſe it, ſo he hath ſovereign unqueſtionable authority enough to bear him out in the uſe of his power. Now, ſeeing God who is cloathed with this abſolute power, yet doth not exerciſe ſuch a power, but having given man a being, continues to very many men a comfortable being in this world, and doth not willingly grieve or afflict any of the children of men; nor execute any vengeance upon them without their deſert; ſurely then God is righteous, he will not do wickedly. Thus we have the importance of the Tranſlation, *If he ſet his heart againſt man*: We ſay, (which alſo beareth fairly enough the ſame ſence) *If he ſet his heart upon man*.

If he gathereth unto himſelf his Spirit and his breath.

Some render it thus; *If he ſet his heart upon (or againſt) man*, *Et ſtatim ad ſe he trahet, Vulg.*

Si direxerit ad eum cor ſuum ſpiritum illum Et ſtatim ad ſe he trahet, Vulg.

he will gather unto him his spirit and his breath : and then, as it followeth, *All flesh shall perish together.*

We repeat the supposition according to the Hebrew Text ; *If he set his heart upon man ; If he gather to himself his spirit and his breath, then &c.* Take either reading, the general sense is the same, and in brief 'tis this : *If God have a minde to it, he can quickly thrust all men out of the world.* He that gave man his spirit and his breath, can at pleasure recal both, and then all flesh perisheth and turneth again unto (what it once was) dust. The Hebrew word which we render to gather, signifieth to add one thing or person to another : When *Rachel had conceived and bare a son*, (Gen. 30. 22, 23.) *she called* (from this word) *his name Joseph, and said, the Lord shall add to me another son.* Thus here, *If God add, or gather to himself his spirit and his breath*, that is, the spirit and breath of man, &c. We may distinguish between these two, spirit and breath (Some insist much and curiously upon this distinction) The spirit denoting the soul or the internal rational power of man, and the breath that effect of life which followeth or floweth from the union of soul and body. The life of man is often expressed by *breath* ; *Cease ye from man, whose breath (or life) is in his nostrils* ; (Isa. 2. 22.) If once man's breath goeth out, his life cannot stay behinde ; the spirit of a man is in this sense distinct from his breath ; for when the breath is vanished, and is no more, the soul or spirit liveth. The Apostle in his prayer for the Thessalonians (1 Theff. 5. 23.) puts *soul and spirit* together : *The very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God, your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved harmless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* There ('tis most probable) by the soul, he intends the inferiour powers in man, or his affections, and by the spirit, his higher powers of reason and understanding : yet the spirit is often put for that whole part of man which is contradistinct to his body. *Into thy hands I commend my spirit* : that is, my soul, not forgetting my body : And I conceive, we may safely expound it here in that latitude, as comprehending the whole inner man. Yet it is all one, as to the sense of this place, whether we take spirit and breath distinctly or for the same ; the spirit being so called from spiration or breathing ; *If he gather unto him his spirit, and his breath.* The gathering of the spirit and breath of man unto God, is but a periphrasis or circumlocution of death,

FOR

Spiritus ani-
man, & fluit
vitam que ab
anima provenit
& conservatur
significat ; ego
opiner idem esse
hoc loco. Sanct.

death, or of man's departure out of this life ; when man was formed or created (*Gen. 2. 7.*) it is said, *God breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul*: And when man dyeth, his breath or spirit may be said to be gathered or returned back unto God ; so then, the meaning of *Elihu* in this double supposition, (*If he set his heart upon man, if he gather to himself his spirit and his breath,*) is clearly this, if God were once resolved, or should but say the word, that man must presently die, die he must, and that presently.

Hence Note,

First, *God can easily do whatsoever he hath a minde to do.*

If he do put his heart upon the doing of any thing, it is done ; Men often set their hearts, yea and their hands unto that which they cannot do ; if men could do that which they set their hearts to do, or have a minde to do, and thereupon set their hands to do, we should have strange work in the world. 'Tis a mercy to many men, that man is often frustrated in his thoughts and purposes, in his attempts and undertakings ; and 'tis a glorious mercy to all that have an interest in God, that God never lost a thought, nor can be hindred in any work he setteth his heart upon. He that can lett or stop all men in their works, can work, and none shall lett or stop him. What God will do, is not defecible or undoeable (if I may so express it) by any power in heaven or earth. And as God can do what he will, and ask no man leave, so he can do what he will without trouble to himself ; 'tis but the resolve of his will, the turning of his hand, or the cast of his eye (all which are soon dispatcht) and 'tis done. Thus God breathed out his wishes for the welfare of Israel, (*Psal. 81. 13.*) *O that my people had hearkned unto me, &c. I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries.* As if he had said, *I could and would have eased them of all their enemies, even of all that rise up against them easily, even with the turning of my hand*: What is more easily done, or more speedily done, then the turning of a hand ? Many things are hard to man, (and indeed very few things are easie to him, except it be to sin, or to do evil, he can do evil easily) some things are not only hard, but too hard, impossible for man ; but there is nothing hard, much less too hard for God, he can easily do the hardest things ; yea, the hardest things are

are as easie to him as the easiest; for as (*Psal. 139. 12.*) *Darkness hideth not from the sight of God, the darkness and the light are both alike to him*; so hardness hinders not the work of God, hardness and easiness are both alike to him, if he set his heart upon it. From this general truth, take two inferences.

First, How should we fear before this God? How should we tremble at the remembrance of, and walk humbly (in our highest assurance) with this God? We are much afraid to displease those men who can easily hurt us, and in whose hand it is to ruine us every hour: But O how little are we in this thought to fear the Lord, to take heed of displeasing the Lord, who can with ease either help or hurt, either bring salvation or destruction; who in a moment can thrust the soul out of the body, and cast both into hell.

Secondly, We may hence make a strong inference for the comfort of the people of God, when their straits are most pinching, and their difficulties look like impossibilities, and are so indeed, while they look to man; when their enemies are strongest, and the mountains which stand in the way of their expected comforts greatest, if then God will be entreated to set his heart, and cast his eye upon them, their straits are presently turned into enlargements, difficulties become easie, and mountains plains. If we can but engage the Lord, (his own promise is the surest engagement, and indeed all that we can put upon him, or minde him of, if (I say) we can thus engage the Lord) to be with us, who can be (to our hurt, many will be to their own) against us.

Secondly Note.

Our life is at the beck, dispose and pleasure of God.

He can gather the spirit and the breath to himself whensoever he pleaseth; (*Psal. 104. 29.*) *Thou hidest thy face and they are troubled, and thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust.* If God hideth his face from us, 'tis death while we live; but if he take away our breath, we cannot live, but die. (*Psal. 90. 3.*) *Thou turnest man to destruction, and sayest; Return ye children of men.* Here's man turning and returning upon the saying of God; man turneth to death, he returneth to dust, and shall at last return from the dust, and all this when God saith he must. Our life is a very frail thing, and it is in the hand of God

to continue or take it away; to let us hold it, or gather it home to himself.

Thirdly, From the manner of speaking, *If he gather to himself his spirit and his breath;*

Note.

When man dieth, he is gathered to God.

When (as Solomon allegorizeth the death of man, *Ecc. 12. 6, 7.*) *The silver cord is loosed, and the golden bowl broken, &c.* Then shall the dust (that is, the body) return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return to God who gave it; that is, each part of man (when he departeth this world) shall go its proper way, and return to that which is most congenial to it; his body to the earth, from whence it is; his soul to God, of whom it is. God is a Spirit, the creating Spirit, and our created spirits are gathered to God when they are separated from the body; yet remember there is a two-fold gathering or returning of the spirit to God.

First, To abide and be blessed with him for ever; thus the spirits of believers or saints only are gathered to God when they depart out of this world.

Secondly, There is a gathering of the spirit to God, to be judged and disposed of by him, to receive a sentence of life or death from him. And thus the spirit of every man or woman that dieth, is gathered to God, be they good or bad, believers or unbelievers, (*Heb. 9. 27.*) *It is appointed for men once to die, but after this the judgement.* 'Tis the Statute Law of God, man must die, and the sound of Judgement is at the heels of death. That Text saith, *but after this the Judgement.* The general day of judgement shall not be till the resurrection of man from the dead; But there is a personal judgement, or a determining of every mans state when he dieth; and for that end every mans spirit is gathered to God to receive his sentence. The spirits of wicked men are gathered to him and condemned, the spirits of the righteous are gathered to him and acquitted: We are come, saith the Apostle (*Heb. 12. 23.*) *to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect.* David knew he must be gathered to God, but he earnestly deprecated such a gathering as most shall have, (*Psal. 26. 9.*) *Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men.* It is this word, when sinners die, they are gathered

thered ; but *David* would not be gathered as they are gathered ; They are gathered to God, but it is that they may be for ever separated from him ; they are gathered to a day of vengeance and wrath : Therefore *David* prayed, *Gather not my soul with sinners.* Death is called a gathering in a threefold reference.

First, *A gathering to our people.* Thus it is said of *Aaron*, (Num. 20. 24.) *Aaron shall be gathered unto his people, for he shall not enter into the land, &c.* Death separates the people of God from their people, that is, from those that are like them on earth, but it will be a means of bringing them into the society of their people, or fellow believers who are gone before them into heaven.

Secondly, Death is called *a gathering to our Fathers*, (2 Chron. 34. 28.) *Behold I will gather thee to thy Fathers, and thou shalt be gathered to thy grave in peace.* There's a gathering to a more special company, and that with other like Scriptures are an argument that we shall know our relations in heaven. For, *to be gathered to our Fathers*, spoken of in the first part of the verse, is more then to be gathered to the grave, spoken of in the latter ; and by our fathers, we are to understand more of our fathers then the grave hath in its keeping (which is but their bodies) even their souls, which are kept in heaven.

Thirdly, According to the phrase of this Text, death is called a gathering to God ; *If he gather unto himself his spirit and his breath.*

Whence Note, Fourthly.

The spirit or soul of man hath its original from God.

It is of him to whom it returneth ; The soul or spirit of man is of God in a more special way then his body is ; for though God giveth both, yet the Scripture (in the place before named) speaks of the soul as the gift of God, but passeth by the body ; (Eccles. 12. 7.) *The dust shall return to the earth, as it was ; and the spirit shall return to God who gave it.* 'Tis God, not man alone, who hath given us these bodies, but 'tis not man, but God alone who hath given us these spirits ; therefore men are called *the fathers of our flesh*, that is, of the body, in way of distinction, from God, *who is the father of spirits* (Heb. 12. 9) *We have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits,*

rits, and live ; that is, shall we not rather be subject to God then to man ? Father of spirits is an Attribute or Title too high and honourable for any but God. One of the Ancients in his gracious breathing after God, brake out into this holy Passion ; *My soul (O God) came from thee, and my heart is unquiet or restless until it return to thee again* ; God is our center, and our rest : He gathereth to himself mans spirit ; and when he doth so, what then ? what's the issue of it ? *Elihu* tells us what in the next verse,

Vers. 15. *All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again to his dust.*

As if he had said, As soon as ever the spirit is gathered, the flesh is consumed, or, as we render, perisheth.

All flesh, may be taken in the largest sence, not only for all men that live, but for all living creatures : Thus largely *Moses* extendeth it, (*Gen. 6. 17.*) *Behold, saith the Lord, I will bring a flood of water to destroy all flesh* ; that is, all the Beasts of the earth, and Fowls of the ayre, together with Mankind, except a few of each in the Ark : so (*Psal. 136. 25.*) *Who giveth food to all flesh*, (that is, to man and beast) *for his mercy endureth for ever*. Yet some understand this first part more narrowly, for all flesh except man ; because he addeth in the latter part of the verse, *and man shall return again to his dust* : But I conceive we are to take *all flesh* here for all men, and only for men, it being usual in Scripture to put the same thing twice, under different expressions. So then

All flesh, that is, every man, be he who he will, *shall perish*. Thus as *all flesh* is restrained to man, so it extendeth over all men, yea over all things of man (*Isa. 40. 6.*) *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof as the flower of the field* ; that is, all men are perishing, and all that man hath, meerly as a man, is as fading and perishing as himself is.

Some take notice, that man was not called flesh till after his fall ; It's said before, when God set him up in that primitive purity of his Creation, *Man became a living soul*. He was not spoken of at first as *flesh*, but as a *living soul*, (*Gen. 2. 7.*) but as soon as man had sinned, he was called *flesh*, as if he had no soul. There may two other reasons be given why man is called flesh, both following from the former. First, Because man since his fall doth

most for his flesh, and neglects his soul altogether, till being planted into the second *Adam*, he is brought out of that wretched condition into which he fell by and with the first *Adam*. Secondly, He is called flesh, because, since the fall man is become weak and frail, both as to Naturals and Morals, (*Gen. 6. 3.*) *My spirit shall not alwaies strive with man, for that he also is flesh*: As if the Lord had said, *Now man declareth himself to be flesh indeed, he acts like an impotent sorry creature, he acts as if he scarce had a soul in him, as if he were no more then the beasts of the earth*: *My spirit shall not alwaies strive with man, for that he also is flesh*; and therefore (*v. 30.*) God told *Noah*, *The end of all flesh is come before me*; that is, Man, and all his worldly glory, shall all be swept away with a deluge of water, as here,

All flesh shall perish together.

There is a two-fold perishing; First, By way of annihilation. Secondly, By way of transmutation. When *Elihu* saith, all flesh shall perish, we are not to understand it of annihilating all flesh; (God can do that, he can turn man back into that nothing out of which he was made) but the perishing in the Text importeth only, a change. Death is called a change, & a change to perishing, as that good & great woman said, *I will go in unto the King, and if I perish, I perish*, (*Hest. 4. 16.*) that is, *If I die, I die*. The Prophet laments (*Isa. 57. 1.*) *The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart. All flesh shall perish*

Together.

That is, without exception, one as well as another, rich and poor, high and low, strong and weak, all are alike in the hand of God, (*Psal. 33. 13. 15.*) *The Lord looketh from heaven, he beholdeth all the sons of men, &c. he fashioneth their hearts alike, or together*; that is, he fashioneth the hearts of all men: God doth not so fashion mens hearts alike, as to make them all alike, (faces do not differ so much as hearts) but as he fashions one mans heart, so anothers; he fashions the heart of a King, as well as the heart of a begger: *All flesh shall perish together*; none either by power or policy can stand against a displeased God.

Again, We may take the word *together*, for all at once, God can make a total devastation in the earth, and sweep all away as
fifth

filth with the besome of destruction ; He can destroy all the world, or all men, who are the chiefe part of the world, together, or at one blow ; so that (as the Prophet *Nahum* speaks, Chap: 1. 9.) *Affliction shall not rise up a second time. All flesh shall perish together,*

And man shall returne againe unto dust.

Or he shall goe backe unto dust, that is, he shall dye : that's the sentence which God gave upon man when he had sinned (*Gen: 3. 19.*) *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou returne unto the ground ; for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou returne.* Man was dust before he sinned ; yet he had not returned to dust , if he had not turned from God by sin. Sin brought in death , and death brings us to the dust. *All flesh shall perish together, and man shall returne againe unto dust.*

Hence observe.

There is no one man hath more priviledge then another, against the sentence of death.

The Greatest Prince dyeth as soone as the meanest peasant. Death can as soone and as easily breake into the strongest fort or tower of stone, as into the meanest cottage of reeds. *High and low shall perish together. Let none hope to secure themselves by any thing of this world from going out of this world. Riches availe not in the day of death* (*Pro: 11. 4.*) High Titles and honours availe not, strength availeth not, beauty availeth not, none of these can be a protection, if God send out a writ or summons to the grave. Happy are they, who get an assurance of life after death, for none have an assurance of life against death.

Againe , In that death is here expressed under this notion of perishing.

Observe.

Man is but in a perishing condition while he is in this world.

As all the things of the world are, so is man, while he abideth (if I may say he abideth) in this world. Christ earnestly exhorts (*John 6. 27.*) *Labour not for the meat that perisheth.* Why should we labour, that is, set our selves with our whole strength and might to pursue perishing things, seeing we our selves are perishing ?

ing? The more perishing we are, the more reason we have to looke after and labour for those things which doe not, which cannot perish. When the Apostle saith (1 Pet. 1. 18.) *We are not redeemed with corruptible things from our vaine conversation, &c.* He doth not instance in flowers or fruits of the earth, which quickly rot, but in gold and silver, which are the most durable and lasting metall; even these are corruptible; but we our selves as to this bodyly life, are corruptible, not only as gold and silver, but as the most fading flowers and summer fruits of the earth.

Further, From that other description of death, as 'tis called *a returning againe unto dust.*

We learne.

Man is of the dust.

Unlesse man, as to his body, were of the dust when he began to live, he could not be sayd to returne unto dust when he dyeth, or departs this life. Many men pore upon their pedigree, and heir minds swell with pride, because they are of such or such a noble descent; but let them remember, *man is of the dust.* The soule or spirit of man is indeed from above, as was shewed before; and the body of man is (I grant) a compound of all the foure Elements. Our bodyly spirits (say Naturalists) are of the fire, our breath of the ayre, our blood of the water, and our flesh and bones are most properly of the dust of the earth; yet the whole body of man is denominatd dust or earth, or as the Apostle stileth it (2 Cor. 5. 1.) 'Tis an *earthly house*; *If our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved.* For though we may truly say, there is water, and ayre, and fire in this house, yet because earth is the predominant Element, the whole body beares the denomination of that. God is not sayd to forme man of the water, or ayre, or fire, but of the dust of the ground (*Gen. 2. 7.*) though all those as well as earth were ingredients in the composition and formation of mans body. As man with respect to his spirituall and moralls, is denominatd from that which is chief in him, so with respect to his naturalls. Every man hath the seeds and principles of all sin in him, yet many men are knowne and exprest by some speciall sin. Thus one is called *a covetous man*, another *a malicious man*, &c. because covetousnesse and malice are their predominant sins in practice, though the principles of all other sins are in them.

So for grace, one is sayd to be a *patient man*, and another an *humble man*, and a third, a *self-denying man*. Though where any grace is all graces are, yet a godly man is knowne by that grace which acts most eminently and vigorously in him. In this notion man is sayd to be of the dust, and to returne to dust, as if he were nothing but dust, because dust is the predominant Element in the naturall constitution of man.

And if so, then this is an humbling consideration. Some walke as if they thought the ground or earth not good enough for them to goe upon. *Moses* setting forth the dreadfullness of famine, as a punishment threatned the Jewish nation in case of disobedience, tells us it shall fall on all sorts, both of men and women (*Deut.* 28. 56.) *The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, &c.* Some are loth to put their feet to the ground, whereas the best foote that ever trod upon the ground, is dust as well as the ground trodden on, and 'tis but dust to dust when they are in the dust, and dirt to dirt if they fall into the dirt. The Apostle, among other reasons, for this also, calleth the body of man a *vile body* (*Phil.* 3. 21.) *Who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.* Our bodies are vile, chiefly from the contagion of sin, that hath made them most vile; But they are comparatively vile, with respect to the very matter out of which they were all representatively made when the first man was made, without the least taint or touch of sin. Man at best as to the body is but a little breathing dust or moving clay. And did we spiritually look upon the matter of our bodies, it would exceedingly humble our spirits, and keep them low even when like *Jordan* they are ready to over-flow all the banks of modesty, and moderation. We heare of a bird, who priding himselfe in spreading and perusing his fine feathers, is presently as it were, ashamed by looking down upon his owne black feete. Surely did man often consider that his whole body is of the earth; it would be an excellent meanes to keepe his heart in a lowly frame, how highly soever himselfe is exalted in the earth.

And as man, while he lives is from the dust; so when he dyeth (that's another humbling consideration) his body not only returneth unto dust, but turneth into dust. *David*, as the figure of Christ cryed out (*Psal.* 22. 15.) *Thou hast brought me into the dust.*

dust of death. Dust and death are neere acquaintance, and all that dy, grow quickly into neerer acquaintance with the dust. It is sayd (*Psal: 103. 14.*) *The Lord knoweth our frame, he remembreth that we are but dust.* But what advantage is that to us, that the Lord knoweth the one, and remembreth the other? I may answer as the Apostle doth to another question (*Rom: 3. 2.*) *much every way,* chiefly, because he will pittie us and spare us and deale tenderly with us, as considering how frayle we are. Now as it may be our comfort that God remembreth we are but dust, so 'tis our duty to remember that we are but dust, and that we must to the dust. Shall God remember that we are dust, and shall not we remember it our selves? Did we more remember that we are dust, we should more prepare for our return to the dust. Yea, I may say, we should be more in heaven, if we were more in our dust; that is, the gracious and serious meditation of our naturall vilenes and infirmities would provoke us to looke heaven-wards, and prepare for heaven, where these our *naturall* bodyes shall become *spirituall* (*1 Cor: 15. 44.*) that is, they shall be like spirits (though not turned into spirits) living without food or sleep, living free from weariness and sickness, from paines and languishments, yea free from the remotest feare of ever dying or returning againe into dust. Such as these and many more would be our soules advantages, did we often (as becomes us) remember that our bodyes are of the earth, and must shortly be earth againe. Thus to be earthly minded, is the way to be heavenly minded. Many are earthly minded, that is, they mind earthly things, but few mind that themselves are earth. In what holy heights and elevations of spirit should we be, if we could spiritually remember how low we once were, and how low, as to our bodyes, we within a few dayes shall be.

Lastly, This truth should take us off from all creature-confidence from trusting in man. *Cursed is the man* (saith the Lord, *Jer: 17. 5.*) *that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arme.* 'Tis a cursed thing for man to trust in man, because trust is an honour proper to God; he alone is to be trusted: And as it is a cursed, so it is also a foolish thing to trust in man. *David* a Great Prince giveth us this counsel from God (*Psal: 146. 3, 4.*) *Put not your trust in Princes, nor in the son of man in whom there is no help; his breath geeth forth, he returneth to his earth (or to his dust) in that day*

all

all his thoughts perish, happy is the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help. What can dust do for dust? what can dust get by dust? that which is weake may become strong, by trusting to, or leaning upon that which is strong; the weakest man is strong enough, while he trusteth upon the strong God; but if weake trust upon weake, how shall it be made strong. Therefore let all flesh hearken to the words of the holy Prophet (*Isa: 2.21.*) (*cast ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrills; for wherein is he to be accounted of?*) Man himselfe is a *some-ceasing* creature (*David* useth the nounce of this verbe to expresse himselfe so, *Psal: 39. 4.*) and therefore we have reason to *cease from man*, to cease from any high estimation of the highest men, much more from any confidence in them. What can we assure our selves of from any man living, seeing he hath no assurance of his owne life? The Prophet would have us understand that, while he saith, *his breath is in his nostrills*; Mans life is gone as soone as his breath is gone, and how soone may that be gone! *David* describeth a proud man, *passing at his enemies* (*Plal: 10. 5.*) He is puffed up and swelled with high conceits of himselfe, as if he had some great matter in him, and he puffs at others as if he could do some great matter against them, forgetting that himselfe is but (as to his being in this world) a puffe of wind, which passeth away. As then, we need not feare what hurt man can doe us, so we should not hope nor have any expectation from him that he by his owne power (how great soever his power is) can doe us any good. *Wherein* (as to either of these purposes) *is man to be accounted of?* Man is an excellent creature, a creature of high account, as bearing the image of God, his soul is of more worth then the gaine of the whole world (*Math: 16.26.*) and thus he is more to be accounted of, then all that in the world is most accounted of; But consider him as to the frailty of his life, and the possibility, yea probability of his suddaine passage out of this world, and then, *wherein is he to be accounted of?* If we oppose man to God, or compare man with God, or trust man in stead of God, he is as vaine and worthlesse as any thing, a thing of nothing, or lesse then nothing.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 16, 17.

If now thou hast understanding, heare this; hearken to the voice of my words.

Shall even he that hateth right, govern? and wilt thou condemne him that is most just?

Elihu having thus farre applied himselfe to *Jobs* friends, upon an Assurance that they were men of understanding; for so he bespake them at the 10th verse; *Hearken unto me ye men of understanding.* He now turneth his speech particularly to *Job*, and he doth it upon a hopefull supposition, that he also was a man of understanding.

Vers. 16. *If now thou hast understanding, heare this.*

The word which we render *understanding*, is not a *noun*, but the infinitive of a verbe in the Hebrew: and it may be rendred thus; *If thou hast to understand*; that is, if thou hast an ability to understand, which in sense is the same with our translation, *If thou hast understanding.* This forme of speaking by the infinitive for the *noun*, is frequent both in Scripture and other Authors. Thus 'tis sayd, *Your to know is nothing*; that is, *your knowledge is nothing*, unlessse another know it, or be made knowing by it. Let us see (saith the Oratour) *what thy to live blessedly is*; that is, what thou countest blessedness. And another, *I have lost to be ashamed*; that is, shamefastness or modesty. Thus Elihu, *If thou hast to understand, heare this.*

כִּי כִּי cum accenti in penultima non potest esse nomen verbale, sed infinitivus loco nominis. Si est intelligere. i. e. intelligentia.

Drusi:

Scire tuum nihil est, &c.

Juven:

Videamus bene vivere vestrum quale sit.

Cic:

Hoc vereri perdidisti. i. e. pudorem. Plaut:

Non caret aculeis Apostrophe quibus Jobi attentionem exci-

But it may be questioned, did Elihu indeed suspect whether *Job* did understand, or were an understanding man? Every man hath an understanding, as he is a man. To understand is the property, the inseparable property of a reasonable creature. Why then doth Elihu put a doubt upon *Job* in this, and say, *If now thou hast understanding, &c.*

I answer; Elihu indeed deales with *Job* as if he were somewhat below man in this businesse, at least, as if he were dull, and slow to receive, and apprehend what had been spoken to him, and there-

therefore by this Apostrophe, he excites and stirs him up to set at. *Si vel mi-*
his understanding a-work to the utmost ; As if he had sayd, *Al-*
ca est in te bo-
na mentis.
though thou hast a habit of understanding, yet thou hast not acted it
like an understanding man ; nor given such prooffe of it in this matter
as is expected. *Merc:*
Infinivum in-
telligere, non

Further, These words, *If now thou hast understanding*, referre
not to the faculty, but to the speciall attributes of his under-
standing ; chiefly to these three. *plenam intelli-*
gentiam indi-
cat, sed vel te-
nuissimum in-
tellestum, qui

First, To the soundness of it ; *If thou hast any thing of a sound*
understanding. The understandings of many are sicke, and disea-
sed, their understandings are tainted and infected with errours
and misperswasions. Now *if thou hast any thing of a sound under-*
standing left in thee, if there remaine yet any strength in thy un-
derstanding, to apprehend the force of those arguments and rea-
sons which I shall propose to convince thee by, *heare this.* Erro-
neous understandings are altogether unfit to entertaine truth.
As there must be a sutableness between the stomach and the meat,
else it is not digested, so between the minde and the object, else
it cannot be received. *infinivum a-*
ctionem presen-
tem non habiti
significat. Stu-
pidum ergo et
recorderem Jo-
bum appellat,
&c. Bold:
Si quid sanæ
mentis habes.
Bez:

Secondly, To the uprightness or impartiality of it ; *If thou*
hast understanding ; that is, *if thou hast an unbiassed understanding* ;
Sometimes the affections turne aside, and bribe the understand-
ing ; self-interest puts a blinde upon the understanding. When a
man hath a minde to that which is not right, he will have a minde
to understand any thing that opposeth it.

Thirdly, To the spirituallness of it, *If thou hast understand-*
ing ; that is, a renewed, a spirituall, an holy understanding, or the
understanding of the holy, *heare this.* A man may have a great na-
turall understanding, a deep judgement, and yet be a very childe,
or a man of no understanding in the things of God. Only a spiri-
tuall understanding is suited to spirituall things, (as the object is,
such must the faculty be) that faculty which deales a-right about
spirituall things, must be a spirituall faculty. The Apostle speakes
concludingly (1 Cor. 2. 14.) *The natural man* (that is, the man
unconverted or unregenerate) *perceiveth not the things of the Spi-*
rit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know
them, because they are spiritually discerned. And therefore the
same Apostle professeth to the Colossians (Chap. 1. 9.) *We doe*
not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled, with

the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom, and spirituall understanding. The will of God being spirituall, cannot be truly knowne but by a spirituall understanding. According to this three-fold attribute of the understanding we may expound *Elihu* speaking to *Job*, If thou hast a spirituall understanding, an unbiassed understanding, a sound understanding, *heare this*. As if he had sayd, *I have spoken, and am about to speake such things as may call out the strength, the best, the utmost line of a sound, impartiall and spirituall understanding, to sound the bottome and the depth of them*. Thus he provokes him to attend, not only with his eare, but with his understanding, with the best of his understanding, with the best understanding to the things he was to speake. And in this sence the most of men, all bad men have no understanding (*Psal.* 14. 2.) and *Job*, though a good man, had much deficiency in his. *If now thou hast understanding, heare this*.

Hence note.

He that hath not a right, a sound, a spirituall understanding, can scarce be said to have any understanding at all.

There are many understanding men, who have not this understanding, or an understanding for this. While *David* saith (*Psal.* 49. 20.) *Man that is in honour and understandeth not*, he supposeth, that a man ascended to the highest pitch of honour, may yet be without understanding, that is, without a right, a sound, a spirituall understanding; and then (as it followeth there) *he is like the beasts that perish*. Beasts have no understanding at all, the rationall or intellectuall power is proper to man. A man in honour, not having this honour, a right understanding, may be numbered among the beasts. *If thou hast understanding,*

Hear this.

As if he had said, I am not calling thee to hear an idle story, or a trivial matter; *Hear this*, there is an emphasis in the words both as to the Act and Object.

It is questioned what *Elihu* particularly intendeth by *this*; some refer it to what he had spoken before in *Job's* audience, though directed to his friends: *Hear* what I have spoken to thy friends in the former part of the chapter, in vindication of the righteousness of God. Secondly, Others refer it to what *Elihu* was
now

now about to say ; I have not yet done, I have not yet brought out all my reasons & arguments, I have not emptied my treasures, I have yet more to say, *Hear this* : A third sort refer these hortatory words, *hear this*, in the former part of the verse, to what he had already spoken, and those in the latter part of the verse, *hearken to the voice of my words*, to what he had yet to speak ; but it is not much to the matter to which we refer them, it being clear, that what he had said, and what he had to say, was matter of weight ; and so *hear this*, is emphatical, *this great, this deep, this useful and necessary point of Doctrine*, which I already have declared, or am now about to declare unto thee.

Hence Note.

That which we hear, we should labour to understand.

(Col. 3. 16.) *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom* ; It is not enough to hear the word with our ears, or to have it in our mouths, it must dwell in our memories, and it must dwell there, not in a beggerly poor fashion, but richly ; which it never doth, till we have a sound and clear understanding of it, and are both in heart and life conformed to it, yea transformed into it ; that is it which the Apostle meaneth by the dwelling of the word in us richly in all wisdom. And he further assureth them (chap. 2. 1, 2.) that he had a *great conflict for them* ; that is (as we put in the Margin) he had a great fear or care of them, that their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgement of the mysterie of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. He had held forth those great mysteries, the mysterie of God considered essentially, the mysterie of the Father considered personally, the mysterie of Christ considered mediatorially ; and therefore he presseth them to get a full assurance of understanding about all these mysteries. When Christ was discoursing with his disciples after his resurrection, (Luke 24. 45.) it is said, *He opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures* ; and then they did not take in what he spake only at the ear, but at the heart also. Thus (Acts 16. 14.) *The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul* ; that is, he gave her an inward ear, and caused her to understand the things which he spake.

Second.

Secondly Note.

Whatsoever we hear is lost, and but scattered in the ayre, if we do not understand it.

Though we have it in our books, yea though we have it in our memories, 'tis lost, if we understand it not; we read of a book, sealed within, and on the back-side, with seven seals, (Rev. 5. 1.) we read also (v. 4.) that *John wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book*: That sealing of the book was nothing else but the shutting of it up from the understanding; and when Christ opened the book, he gave the understanding of it: the whole book of God is a sealed book, unless we have an understanding, or a saving knowledge of the truths therein contained. What *John* said (Rev. 13. 18.) of counting that mysterious number of the Beast, must be said in its proportion of the whole mysterie of godliness, let him that hath understanding count and consider them.

Note Thirdly.

Every understanding is not fit to receive the Truths of God.

An unregenerate man is not fit to receive any of the Truths of God; *The natural man* (that is, the man who hath nothing but nature in him) *perceiveth not the things of God*, he hath not a suitable faculty for them; and as a natural mans understanding cannot at all receive the things of God, so every degree of a spiritual understanding cannot receive all the truths of God, or not all the things of God in all their truth. The Apostle distributes persons into several degrees, and calls some *babes*, and others *grown or perfect men*; that is, such as have an understanding fit to take in and digest the highest and deepest things of God; and hence it is, that Christ told his disciples (*John* 16. 12.) who had a renewed understanding, only *it was in a low degree, I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now*; I suppose the reason why Christ saith they could not bear those *many things*, was not because being *many*, they were too great a burden for their memories, (though possibly there might be somewhat in that) but their inability of bearing those many things, was chiefly in their understanding. There are some truths, which though a man can remember, yet he cannot bear them; and the more he remembers them,

the

the less he can bear them ; the weight and mysteriousness of them even cracks his brain, till he receives more light from God, and more strength of understanding, he cannot bear them : *If thou hast understanding, hear this ;*

And hearken to the voice of my words.

This latter part of the verse is but the repetition or further enforcement of the same thing, we had the like expressions chap. 33. 1. 8. and therefore I shall not stay upon this, only Note further from the whole.

The beginning of true wisdom is to have a readiness to hear, and to shew our selves teachable.

Some overween themselves so much, as to matter of knowledge, that they will not be taught ; they judge themselves so learned, and fully instructed, that they will hear no more instruction ; nor learn any other lesson, they are past the School ; yet alwaies they who know much in their own conceit, are least knowing in truth and reality : there is nothing doth so much hinder the receiving of knowledge, as an imagination or proud prepossession of it. *The sluggard* (saith Solomon, Prov. 26. 16.) *is wiser in his own conceit, then seven men that can render a reason :* They which have least reason, are the greatest neglecters of it ; only an understanding man is willing to hear, that he may gain more understanding. Therefore *Elihu* admonisheth *Job*, *If now thou hast understanding, hear this, and hearken to the voice of my words :* What *Elihu* would have *Job* hear and hearken to, followeth in the next verse, and in those which follow, to the end of the 33^d verse.

Vers. 17. *Shall even he that hateth right govern ? and wilt thou condemn him that is most just ?*

This is matter indeed worth the hearing and hearkning to.

Shall even he that hateth right govern ?

Shall he ? He shall not, or at least should not, he ought not ; he of all men is the unfittest man to govern, that is ; to do all men right, who hateth right. The Interrogation leads us to this strong Negation, or indignation rather ; What ! He that hateth right, whose very spirit is against it, whose affections withdraw from it, is he

UDU Judicium, significat ordinem quo quicquid in loco convenienti constituitur, sic odians judicium est, qui non subseribit divino ordini. Coc. he made up for a Governour ! The Hebrew word notes *right from man to man ; Justice or righteousness consists in the due order and comely disposition of things and affairs, transacted and dispensed in this world from man to man, or between man and man ;* it imports also that order into which the most wise providence of God placeth both things and persons ; we may take it here in both or either of these senses ; *Shall he that hateth right*

Govern.

UDU Ligavit alligavit Domini etiam significat, quod qui dominatur suis iugis præceptis legibusque transgressores. Pagn.

The word rendered to *Govern*, hath a threefold signification in Scripture. First, and most properly, to *binde up* : Secondly, by a Metaphor, to *heal* ; because there is so great a use of binding in healing ; the skilful ligature of a wound, or of a broken limb, is of so much consequence in Chirurgery, or the art of healing, that binding alone is put for healing ; that which is well bound, is in a fair way to healing. We finde both these acts put together in that great promise of the Churches glory under the Gospel, (*Isa. 30. 26.*) *Moreover the light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, &c. in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the stroke of their wound.*

Numquid qui non amat iudiciū sanari potest. Vulg.

Many learned Translators render the word here, by binding or healing, or by binding, as it refers to healing. The Vulgar Latine gives it passively, *Can he who doth not love right be healed ?* The sence of which reading is this ; *God doth not use to heal or binde up the wounds of those who hate Right or Justice* : Why should the wounds of those Magistrates be healed, who have no care, by doing right, to heal the wounds of others ? I shall not stay upon this Translation, because the Original Text clearly carryeth an active signification. And some who retain this sence of the word, translate it actively ; *Shall, or will God heal him that hateth right ?* Surely he will not : If a man hate Justice, and right, how can he expect that God should be a healer to him ? And thus it is expounded in reference to *Job*, who complained that God did not heal him of his wounds, his wounds, though great, were not cured : now saith *Elihu*, *Will God heal him that hateth right ;* that is, who doth not approve of that which is right ; or, as it followeth, *who condemneth him that is most just*, as *Elihu* charged *Job* to have done.

An etiam edio habentis iudicium obligaret (sc. vulnus.) Jun.

An etiam si qui odio habet ius obligaret vulnervm. Pisc.

Again, another renders, *Will he that hateth the right heal the wounded ?*

wounded? The sence of which reading is given thus; Surely God who is ready to binde up and heal the wounds of those that are afflicted when they repent, is no hater of right, no perverter of Justice, as thou O *Job* hast said God doth; seeing God is ready to heal the wounds, and binde up the sores of humbled sinners, how unjustly hast thou charged him with perverting of justice? The Tygurine version gives it thus, *Will he that hates right, act the part of a Chirurgion?* Will he binde up and heal? Doubtless he will not, but will rather wound and afflict, vex and trouble more and more instead of being a healer. Either of these renderings bear a good sence of this Scripture; yet I shall rather take up our Translation, and insist upon it. And therefore

An qui odit judicium Chirurgos imitaretur.
Tygur.

Thirdly, The word signifies tropically *to rule or govern*; and the reason ariseth clearly from the proper signification of it; because he that is a Ruler or a Governour, is also a binder and a healer: Magistrates binde the people that are under them to order, they binde them by their Laws. Laws are as bonds, they have a binding power, they binde either to obedience or to punishment; and therefore Magistrates are binders; they binde the unruly and disobedient, they binde with the rule of the Law, and with the penalties of the Law. When any break the rule of the Law, then they fall under the penalties of the Law, so that every way a Magistrate is a binder; and as he is a binder, so a healer; The Laws of Government by which people are bound, are for their healing, for the healing of their manners and corruptions; as also, for the healing of those whom they have oppressed or wounded by their evil manners and corruptions. Further, all Governours should, and righteous Governours will improve their power and authority for the healing of those differences that arise among their subjects, or those over whom they are set: In all these respects, Magistrates are *healers and binders*. Thus the Prophet (*Isa. 3. 6, 7.*) expresth them, *When a man shall take hold of his brother, of the house of his father, saying, thou hast clothed, be thou our Ruler, and let this ruine be under thine hand:* Here is a breach, a ruine in the State or Commonwealth, let this be under thy hand, do thou undertake the cure of this; but *in that day shall he swear (v. 7.) I will not be a healer:* We put in the margin, *a binder*, that is, I will not be your Governour; your case is so desperate, and you are so obstinate in your way, that I dare not

Verbum ligandi
וְלִיגְלִיגְלִי sumitur pro imperare vel verum potiri, quia qui imperant ligant, &c.
Merc.
Leges a ligando dicuntur.

undertake your cure, *I will not be a healer to you, or I will not be your binder*; or as the reason of his refusal is there given by the Prophet, from his own inability or incompetency for that undertaking; *In my house is neither bread nor clothing, make me not a Ruler of the people.* Thus the word very significantly holds out the office and use of Governours; they are or ought to be binders or healers: the wounds of the Body politick need a healer as much as those of the body natural; *Governours are State-Physicians*: and therefore we read very well, *Shall he that hateth right govern?* Mr Broughton saith, *Can a see to Judgement rule well?* taking this sence, *Elihu* doth two things in this verse.

First, He sheweth how unfit an unjust person is to rule; this he doth in the former part of the verse.

Secondly, He sheweth how unfit it is to condemn or censure a just Ruler; this he doth in the latter part of the verse. *Shall even he that hateth right govern?* He ought not. And shall he that governeth rightly be hated? Shall he fall under unrighteous condemnations, who condemneth others rightly? He should not. As he that is unjust is unfit to govern, so 'tis not only uncomely, but abominable to condemn a just Governour. This is the sum of the whole verse. From the former part of it already opened, *Shall he that hateth right govern?*

Observe.

First, *Some men are haters of Justice, Right, and Righteousness.*

What is there so good, but an evil man hateth it? and the better it is, the more he hateth it: How precious a thing is righteousness, yet 'tis hated; (*Mic. 3. 1, 2.*) *Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, &c. Is it not for you to know judgement, who hate the good and love the evil?* How precious a thing is peace? and yet there are peace-haters; *My soul* (saith David, *Psal. 120. 6.*) *hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace.* How sweet a thing is light? the light of the Gospel, yet there are many light-haters, (*Joh. 3. 20.*) *He that doth evil, (loving to do it) hateth the light:* How precious a thing is holiness? and yet there are holiness-haters; how precious a thing is truth? and yet there are truth-haters; how infinitely precious is God? and yet there are God-haters; (*Rom. 1. 30.*) How lovely, how desireable is Jesus Christ, both as a Saviour and as a Sanctifier? yet even Jesus Christ (who hath loved us, and washed

washed us with his own blood) is hated : There are many *Christ-haters*, as himself told the Jews (*John 15. 24.*) *They have both seen and hated both me and my Father.* And if there be that principle of abomination in the heart of man to hate God and Christ, what good is there that the heart of man may not set his hatred upon ? *Elihu* supposeth that there are haters of Right and Justice, which are the most amiable things in the world, and should attract the love of all persons to them.

Secondly, When *Elihu* saith, *Shall even he that hateth right govern ?* How disdainfully doth he speak of such ?

Hence Note.

To hate right is a most hateful thing.

He is not worthy the name of a man that hateth right. When the Prophet *Elisha* told *Hazael* what strange things he should do, what havock he should make in the world, he said (*2 King. 9. 13.*) *But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing ?* as if he had said, to do such a thing, renders a man as vile and contemptible as a dog : 'Tis a piece of unrighteousness to reckon or number them among men, who are haters of that righteousness which should be exercised among men, and is the preservation of mankind ; not to honour righteousness is a hateful thing, not to do right at all times, and in all things, is a hateful thing ; what is it then to hate right ? How justly hateful are Justice haters !

Some may say, are there any indeed so bad as to hate right ?

I answer, First, There are some who profusely, plainly, with a bold and bare face hate the right ; there is in all natural men a seed of this hatred. *The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God ;* and surely, if it be enmity against God, it must needs be enmity against all that is good ; now as there is a seed of that enmity in every man's nature, so there will be the workings and fruits of that enmity in many mens lives.

Secondly I answer, He may be said to hate right that doth not approve right, that doth not love and delight in it ; not to love, not to delight in that which is right, is to hate the right. As he that doth not love God, is a hater of God ; the second Commandment speaks thus, *I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and shewing mercy to thousands of*

them that love me, and keep my Commandments. Hating of God, and loving of God, divide the whole world ; they that do not love God, hate him ; there is no middle, of participation between these two, between the love and hatred of God : so there is a hatred of Justice or Right in him who loves it not ; though a man do not make profession against it, yet if he hath not an affection to it, he will at last be found amongst that most hateful company, the haters of righteousness : not to hate evil, is to love it, and not to love good, is to hate it in God's account. Many stand as neuters in the dayes of this world, but in that great day of the end of the world, there will be no neuters seen : all shall stand in two parts, either among the sheep or goats ; and among all the sheep there will not be one found, who hath not been a lover of goodness and righteousness ; nor one among all the goats, who hath not been (in the judgement and esteem of God) a hater of them.

Thirdly, They may be said (in a degree) to hate right, who though they have some love to it, yet love it in a less degree then they should, or less then they ought ; *a lower or lesser degree of love, is a kinde of hatred* in Scripture language : The Law of Moses saith (Deut. 21. 15, 16, 17.) *If a man have two wives, one beloved, and another hated, and they have born him children ; both the beloved and the hated, and if the first born son be hers that was hated ; then it shall be when he maketh his son inherit that which he hath, that he may not make the son of the beloved first-born before the son of the hated ; &c.* But what doth he mean by the wife that is hated ? Surely the wife that is not so much loved ; though he loved both truly, yet not loving both in the same degree, he is said to hate one of them : so I conceive that Scripture is to be understood (Luke 14. 26.) where Christ gives the rule concerning Disciple-ship ; *If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea and his own life also, he cannot be my Disciple* : When Christ layeth this charge upon his Disciples, to hate wife, and children, &c. would he have his Disciples turn their hatred upon those relations ? the rule of the Word forbids that : So then, his meaning is only this, if in case of following me, a man finde any stop or hindrance by these, he must not let out his love so to wife, and children, &c. as to hinder his coming to, or following of me. Every man must take

off so much love from these dearest worldly enjoyments, as hinders men in following Christ; and he who through grace is enabled to do so, is in a true and clear Gospel sense said to hate them. That which we can leave for Christ, we hate in comparison of that love which we bear to Christ. Thus in the Text and Point, they may be said to *hate the right*, who bear not a due proportion of love unto it; not to love righteousness with highest & warmest affections, is a degree of hatred. Some love the right, but they love it lightly, they love it less than riches and gain; and and therefore for self-gain they turn aside from, and forsake the right. Some will speak fair for Justice, till the offer of private advantage either put out their eyes, or stop their mouths; he that loves not to do right to others more than to enrich himself, will quickly wrong others to enrich himself: Now he that upon any terms or considerations whatsoever (though it were to the advantage only of some others who are poor and distressed, much more when its for his own advantage) is drawn to pervert the right, is a hater of it. Remember, any lesser degree of love to that which is right, may at any time be interpreted the hatred of it; and when we love it less than our own concerns, we cannot resist temptations which entice us to do that which will declare a direct hatred of it.

Thirdly, From the whole tenour of these words, *Shall he that hateth right govern?*

Note.

They that hate right, or righteousness, are altogether unfit to Govern, or to be Governours?

Nothing is more contrary to the state of Government, or the qualification of a Governour, than to hate right; righteousness is the sphere wherein he ought to walk, and never to move out of it; 'tis the business he hath to do, the trade which he hath to drive; whatsoever he doth in that capacity, he must be doing righteous things. So far as any man hath the power of Government in his hand, if it be but over a family, much more over a Nation, he ought to do right; *David's* prayer for himself as a King, and for his son who was to succeed him in the Kingdom, was only and altogether this, (*Psal. 72. 1.*) *Give the King thy judgements, O Lord, and thy righteousness unto the Kings son*; that is, teach both me:

me and him what is right, give us a heart conformable to it, and a readines of minde alwayes to do it : That's the scope of his prayer wāen he said, *Give the King thy judgements, O Lord, and thy righteousness to the King's son* : Nor doth he barely pray for the gift of judgement and righteousness, but he puts the stamp of God upon them ; *Give them thy judgements, and thy righteousness*. It is possible for Kings to have a judgement of their own, and a righteousness of their own, which are not the judgements nor the righteousness of God. For as there is a righteousness of God, which some being ignorant of, trust to a righteousness of their own for the justification of their person ; so there is a righteousness of God for the government of man, which some neglecting, use only a righteousness of their own, both in condemning and justifying other mens both persons and causes ; Princes being in Gods place, should exalt the righteousness of God in the governing of men. And therefore the same *David* in his dying song spake thus (2 Sam: 23. 3.) *He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the feare of God* ; who ever he is he must be just, and he must be just in the feare of God, which he can never be, but ingiving out the righteousness of God ; that is, in dispensing that for righteousness, which is right according to the will of God. And if he must doe right thus, how shall he doe it, if he hate it ? no man will doe that willingly or constantly which he hateth ; he that hates right is so farre from doing it himselfe, that he cannot abide others should doe it. Whereas a governour, is not only to doe right himselfe, but to appoynt others to doe it, and to see that they doe it, or else to punish them for not doing it. The Rulers of the earth are sayd to *beare the sword* (Rom: 13. 4.) And they are sayd to *be Shields* (Psal: 47. 9.) They are shields to protect the good, and swords to take vengeance of those that doe evill ; both which are the workes of righteousness. And if so, shall ever he that hateth right governe ?

And wilt thou condemne him that is most just ?

*Fieri ne potest
ut qui omnibus
imperat, juris
amans non sit,
aut quicquam
injuste agat.*
Merc:

The scope of *Elihu* in the former part of the verse was to demonstrate that God is no hater of right, or righteousness, for he is not only A Governour, but The Governour, all the world over, or over all the world, and it were a most absurd thing, to thinke that he should be the Governour of the world, and yet be a hater

of right? can it be imagin'd that he who ruleth all men, should wrong any man? Now seeing God who ruleth all is alwayes most righteous, wilt thou (O Job) *condemne him* (saith Elihu) *that is most just*? God our governour is so farre from hating, that he is ever promoting justice, he that is so, is most just, and wilt thou condemne him that is most just?

Wilt thou condemne?

To condemne is to sit in Judgement; and give sentence against another. Wilt thou condemne, or give sentence against God? Wilt thou (as some translate according to the strictness of the Original) *make him wicked, that is most just*? Elihu makes use of a very hard and severe word, and it is conceived that he purposely pitcht upon it, or pickt it out, to convince Job, that it is no small fault, or offence, to complaine of or to quarrell with the dealings of God. 'Tis indeed to condemne God, and to make him wicked, as the word imports; *Wilt thou condemne him*

that is most just?

Here are two words; in the Hebrew we put them together, and so render them by a superlative, *most just*. Some translate, *Wilt thou condemne him that is strong and just*? that is, strongly just, mightily just; God is full of strength and might, so full that he, and he only is *Almighty*; yet his might never exceedeth right, nor his strength his justice. Strength and justice are commensurate in God. And while he is so strong, that he can doe what he will, he is so just that he will doe nothing but what is righteous.

Further, I find others joyning the word *strong*, with the word *condemne*. As if Elihu had sayd, *Wilt thou so confidently, and pertinaciously; condemne the just God? To condemne God, though but a little, to passe the easiest sentence of condemnation upon him is bad enough; but wilt thou strongly condemne him?* We render clearly to the scope of the place, *Wilt thou condemne him that is most just?*

Hence note.

First, *God is most just, or altogether just.*

He is strongly just, mightily just; as he is strongly mercifull,

Et an justum
infiguem impi-
um facis?
Heb:

כביר צדק
validum justū.
i. e. qui valde
justus est.

Drus:
Num eum, qui
זרע' וצדק
justus est, ut
deser omnium
judicio est, in
justitie dam-
nare sustines.
כביר potest
exponi validū,
num justum et
potentē eum qui
simul et justus
et potens est
damnare audes,
כביר sed malo
exponere per
מאד multum
valde, q. d. eum
qui summe ju-
stus est audes
damnare, de eo
queri, quasi ti-
bi sit iniquior.

Rab: Sel:
putting Merc:

putting forth a power in pardoning sin, and shewing mercy, so he is strongly just, or altogether just. The rule given to Judges by Moses speakes thus, (*Deut: 16. 20.*) *That which is altogether just, shalt thou follow.* We put in the margin, *justice, justice, shalt thou doe*; that is, thou shalt doe pure Justice, nothing but Justice, or justice without the least mixture, tincture, or (if it be possible) without the least shadow of injustice. I may say, *justice, justice is God*, that is, he is *altogether just*, strongly just, everlastingly and unchangeably just. God is just under a three-fold notion.

Σικαιοῦς ἐστὶν ὁ
παισὶν ἀρετῶν
ἰσχυρ. Phavor:

First, As to be just is taken *largely*, importing a person accomplished with concurrence of all perfections, and vertuous qualities. In that sence, I suppose, the Apostle useth the word (*1 Tim. 1. 9.*) *The law is not given for* (that is, to terrifie or condemne) *a just man*; that is, for a man who is holy and good. Thus God is *altogether just*; for he hath all the lines of perfection, of holiness, and goodnesse centring in him, he is not only just and vertuous, but justice and vertue it selfe.

Secondly, To be just, imports the keeping of promises, and the performance of our word. He is a just man, who when he hath spoken, you may know what to have of him, and where to have him. Some give words, and you can get nothing of them but words, that's injustice, because our words binde us and should be as lawes to us. A man may chuse whether he will make promises, but when he hath promised, it is not in his choice, whether he will performe or no; his word binde him. In this sence, *God is altogether just*. Whatsoever word you have had from God, (and he hath given us many comfortable words for every condition) God is a just God, and will performe it to a tittle. That Glorious and everlasting witness is borne to him by dying Joshua. (*Josh: 23. 14.*) *And behold this day I am going the way of all the earth, and ye know in all your hearts, and in all your soules, that not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord your God spake concerning y^e: all are come to passe unto you, and not one thing hath failed thereof.* In this sence, God is sayd to be, not only mercifull, but just in forgiving our sins (*1 John 1. 9.*) *If we confesse our sins, he is faithfull and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnesse.* If we confesse our sins spiritually and believingly, deeply, humbly, and affectionately; if we confesse thus, he is just to forgive; why? because he hath given
a pro-

a promise to forgive those who make such confessions of sin. And thus 'tis in any other promise ; he keepes his word, he keepes touch with man, he will not fayle nor come short in the least, therefore he is altogether just.

Thirdly , He is just in the strictest acception of justice, giving every one his due. It is possible for a man to be just in neither of the two former notions, he may neither be vertuous in his actions, nor a keeper of his word as a man, & yet he may be just as a Magistrate, just as in a cause committed to his determination. But God is just in all these three considerations of a just man, and therefore he is eminently, or altogether just. And I conceive, the latter of the three is chiefly intended here ; *God is most just*, that is, he never did, nor ever will, give an undue or an undeserved sentence upon any man.

I might shew distinctly, that God is just, and how just he is ; First, in rewarding those that doe well ; Secondly, in punishing those that doe ill. And that because he doth it ; First, by a law ; Secondly, by a law published ; Thirdly , by a law possible (our inability of keeping the law is consequentiall to the giving of it ; man hath drawne it upon himselfe) though now he cannot performe it at all, yet God is just in punishing, because he sins against a law that he had a power (in his head or representative) to have fulfilled. Fourthly, God is just, because the penalties which he inflicteth flow from a right and just law (as the Apostle speaks, *Rom: 7. 12.*) *The law is holy, and just, and good* ; and therefore all the awards that are grounded upon it must needs be just too. Fifthly, he punisheth justly, because he never punisheth but upon prooffe, and evidence ; yea he will make every mans Conscience a witness against himself, or condemne him out of his own mouth. Sixthly, he punisheth justly, because he punisheth impartially, neither feare, nor hope, nor favour, can divert him (*Isa: 27. 11. Jer: 22. 24.*) Seventhly, he doth not only punish in a proportion to the law, but often in a proportion to the sin , and that not only to the measure of the sin , but to the manner of the sin ; as that cruel king *Adonibezek* confessed, when himselfe was cruelly dealt with (his thumbs and great toes being cut off, *Judg: 1. 7.*) *As I have done so God hath requited me* : As if he had sayd, God is just not only because he hath punished me in measure according to my sin, but after the very same manner in which I sinned,

ned, he hath as it were hit my sin in the eye of all beholders; what I have done may be seene by what I suffer.

Note, Secondly.

To condemne God, who is most just, is the highest pynt of injustice.

Wilt thou condemne him that is most just? wilt thou do such a thing? what? condemne him that is most just! How great a wickednesse is this, if we consider, First, that what-ever God doth, we ought to be patient under it. Secondly, that whatsoever God doth, we ought to acquiesce or rest quietly and contentedly in it; that's more then to be patient. Thirdly, that whatsoever he doth, we ought to approve and justifie God in it. Fourthly, that we ought to magnifie God whatsoever he doth, though his dispensations are bitter, & burthensome; and if we do so we shall finde the bitterest dispensations sweete to us. Now if we ought to be patient under, to acquiesce in, to approve of, yea to magnifie and exalt the name of God in all his dealings with us and determinations concerning us, then how sinfull is it to condemne him? What? shall such poore creatures as we, take upon us to censure and condemne the workes of God! Some say it at least in their hearts, if they had the reines of government in their hands, they would carry things evener then God doth; they would put all things right, if they might have the rule; if they might a while doe as they thinke fit, they would doe all things fitly. Some will talke thus arrogantly of their fitness to governe the whole world, who have not wit enough to governe their owne families; nor any grace at all to governe themselves; yea they will presume they could governe all men, who are scarce fit to governe a heard of swine, or as *Job* speaks (*Chap: 30. 1.*) *to be set over the dogs of a mans flocke*; such as these will take upon them to governe the world, & say they could do it better then 'tis done. Things should not goe thus, if they might have their will. Though indeed (like that rash and inconsiderate young man in the fabulous Poet, who desired for one day at least to be Charioteere to the Sun) if they might have their will, they would set the whole world a-fire, or put all into a flame in one day. Thus, *vaine man would be wise* (as *Zophar* sayd, *Chap: 11. 12.*) *Though man be borne like a wild asses colt*, that is, being altogether unwilling to be governed by any.

any right law, he would faine give the law to and governe all; what is this but to condemne the most just? and how great, how blasphemously impudent a wickednesse is this!

But some may say, Did *Job* ever thus condemne God?

I answer; he did not condemne him in so many words, he did not formally sit upon his tribunall, and condemne God, but he spake such words as did shew a condemning of God, and *Elihu* justly condemned him for speaking them.

Hence note, lastly.

Not to submit freely to, or to complaine of the dealings of God, is a condemning of God.

This is a hard saying, we may be almost astonished to heare it, what? condemne God? yeas, so farre as any man murmurs against the dealings of God, so farre he condemnes God. The workes of God must be submitted to, as wel as his word, his dispensations must be obeyed as wel as his lawes and constitutions. Our complaints of what he doth are censures of his person. We question not only the soveraignty and power of God, but his very wilddome and truth and justice, when we reluct against any of his acting; or awards concerning us, though they produce our greatest sufferings. This *Elihu* further aggravates in the next words; *Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked? and to Princes, Ye are ungodly?* If men will be mannerly to Princes, how much more mannerly ought they to be towards God?

J O B. Chap. 34. Vers. 18, 19.

Is it fit to say to a King, thou art wicked, and to Princes, ye are ungodly? How much less to him that accepteth not the Persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor? for they are all the work of his hands.

THese two verses are both an Illustration and a Confirmation or proof of what *Elihu* spake last in the close of the 17th verse, *Wilt thou condemn him that is most just?* Hereupon he infers

Vers. 18. *Is it fit to say to a King, thou art wicked?*

Those words, *Is it fit*; are not literally and expressly in the hebrew; and therefore some connect these two verses immediately with the former; *Wilt thou condemn him that is most just? Who saith to a King, O thou wicked? and to Princes, O ye ungodly?* That is, who is so just, that he spares not to tell the greatest Kings and Princes of their wickedness and ungodliness? Or as the Vulgar Translation hath it, *Who saith to a King, O thou Apostate?* I tell thee, Thou art fallen from that Justice and Righteousness which thou didst once exercise in thy Government. It is said of *Nero*, he had his *five years* wherein he govern'd excellently, but afterward he proved Apostate, cruelly tyrannizing over (instead of ruling) his people; as there are Apostates in Spirituals, so in Civils; *an apostate is an hypocrite revealed, an hypocrite is an apostate veild*: God unvails hypocrites of all sorts, and will not fail sooner or later to reprove their Apostacy. *It is better not to be good, then not to continue good*: Backsliders are worse then they who never set one step in the wayes of God and goodness.

So then, according to this reading, the sence may be given out thus: As if *Elihu* had said, *How canst thou (O Job!) possibly imagine that God should be unjust, when he doth not forbear to tell the greatest Kings of their injustice, and convince them of it; he who calleth degenerate Kings Apostates, and unjust Princes wicked; he that is thus impartial in reckoning with Kings, and the mighty men of*

*Qui dicit Regi
Apostata, qui
vocat Duces
impios &c.
Vulg.
An dicentem
Regi O ne-
quam, O impro-
bum ingenuum,
condemnavis?
Jun.
Quinquennium
Neronis.*

the earth (as indeed God hath alwaies been, and will ever be) How ſhould he be unjuſt? Wilt thou condemn the moſt Juſt? Even him who is ſo juſt, that he rebukes injuſtice whereſoever he findes it, and who can finde it whereſoever it is? (Pſal. 105. 14.) He reprov'd Kings for their ſakes, (that is, for the ſake of his peculiar people, when they did them wrong,) ſaying, *Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm*: implying, that he truſts Kings with that great power to protect his anointed, and to ſave his Prophets from harm; and therefore would not take it well at their hands, if they abuſed their power to hurt and afflict them. This is a good reading, but I ſhall not inſiſt upon it, though ſome inſiſt much upon it, becauſe I would rather favour our own Tranſlation, and carry the Interpretation that way, as containing an argument to prove, that it is a moſt wicked thing to condemn God as unjuſt, becauſe men are ſcarce any where found ſo preſumptuous, or bold, as to ſay to a King, *Thou art wicked, or to Princes, ye are ungodly*. It is much eaſier for any man, much more for great men to do evil, then for others to tell them ſo: And as the faults of Princes ſeldome finde reprovers, ſo it requires a great deal of wiſdome, not to commit a fault in reproving them.

Is it fit to ſay to a King thou art wicked?

Is this a comly thing? Or will Kings endure it? And if ſo, doth it become thee, O *Job*, to ſpeak hardly of God? Or will he endure it? *Elihu* did not charge *Job* with ſpeaking evil of God directly; but would intimate to him, that while he was ſo unquiet under the afflicting hand of God, and preſſed him ſo often for a further hearing of his cauſe, he did very dangerously reflect upon his Juſtice; and that ſeeing we ſtand in awe of Kings and Sovereigne Princes, and dare not misbehave our ſelves before them, nor let fall an unreverend word concerning them, how durſt he preſume to ſpeak any thing unſeemly of God?

Is it fit to ſay to a King,

Thou art wicked.

Kings are ſupream, they are cloathed with Sovereigne power over all perſons within their Dominion; Is it therefore fit to uſe ſuch coarſe language, ſuch down-right unheaven ſpeeches in any

any address to them? *Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked?* The original word imports the worst sort, the most infamous among wicked men; So Mr Broughton renders, *Is it meet that one say to a King, Belial?* Some give it in the Vocative case, *Is it meet for a subject to say to his Sovereigne, O thou Belial! O thou wicked one?* Dare any speak thus to a King?

This word *Belial* is often used in Scripture, to note, not only a wicked man in general, but an eminently wicked man, even a man in whom all wickedness is (as it were) centred and settled, the very lees and dregs of all men, who may be called wicked. When Jezebel procured and suborned two false witnesses against Naboth, it is said, *There came in two men, children of Belial, (1 Kings 21. 13.) and sate before him: and the men of Belial witnessed against him, even against Naboth in the presence of the people, saying, &c.* These witnesses were perjured persons; to tell a lye is the worst of sins; what then is it to swear a lye? no word could reach the height of this wickedness more fully, then to call them *children of Belial*. When the Lord comforted the Church with the glad tydings of the Gospel, (*Nah. 1. 15.*) *Behold the feet of those upon the mountains that preach peace; O Jerusalem keep thy solemn Feasts, perform thy Vowes;* He subjoyns this promise as a reason, *The wicked shall no more pass thorow thee, he is utterly cut off.* We put in the margin, *Belial shall no more pass thorow thee;* that is, thou shalt then be freed from those Belialists who formerly interrupted thy peace, by vexing and persecuting thee, or prophaned thy holy Assemblies by mixing themselves with thee: But I give thee assurance the time is coming, when Belial shall no more trouble thee. Yea Belial is a Title so full of wickedness, that it fits the Devil himself, whom the Scripture brands with that black mark, *The wicked one, or the evil one.* The Apostle puts that question with much holy disdain; (*2 Cor. 6. 14, 15.*) *What communion hath light with darkness? and what concord hath Christ with Belial?* that is, Christ with the Devil? They differ from the Devil only in flesh and blood, in nature they are as bad as he, who bear his name.

This may yet further appear, if we look into the Grammatical derivation of it, *Belial*, is commonly expounded a man without a yoke, or a man that will not be yoked; that is, a man who will not come under command, a lawless person; so we translate the

Apostle's

Apostle's word, (1 Tim. 1. 9.) *The Law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly, and for sinners, &c.* that is, for the sons of *Belial*, or, for such as will not endure the yoke; the Law is a yoke, Christ calls the Law of the Gospel his yoke, (Matth. 11. 29.) and they that will not bear the yoke of Christ, shall never have benefit by the Cross of Christ; we must take up the yoke of Christ, if we would taste the fruit of the Cross of Christ. Now a *Belialist*, will not hear of, nor have to do with the yoke; he is like the wilde Ass described in the 39th of *Job*, who will not be taught to plow, nor be bound in the furrow; you cannot make the wilde Ass work like the Oxe. Wicked men have hard and stony hearts, yet such soft, tender, and delicate necks, that they cannot abide the yoke; 'tis their bondage to be tyed to obedience.

Again, The notation of the word *Belial*, imports a person of no use; or altogether *unprofitable*, a man that is good for nothing, a meer unthrif, or spendthrift, a man that neither doth good to himself, nor to any others; as if he were born only to spoil and devour all that is before him, as if he came into the world to eat other mens labours, and not to labour that he might have to eat. Christ calleth the idle or slothful servant, an *unprofitable servant*, (Matth. 25. 30.) and to be an unprofitable servant, is to be a son of *Belial*; one that hath no good in his heart, nor doth any good in his place, neither in his private nor publick capacity; neither in his own family, nor in the neighbourhood, and Nation where he lives. No man is born for himself, nor ought any man to live to himself. It were better not to live, then not to be doing good while we live. He that liveth only to profit himself, liveth to little purpose; to what purpose then doth he live, whose life is altogether unprofitable to himself? And indeed, he that is not in some respect or other a common good, or good to others, cannot be good, nor do any true good to himself; yet such is the wicked man represented under the notion of this Text. Seeing then there are such bad and base significancies in the bowels of this word; is it sufferable by a King? *Is it fit to say to a King, thou art Belial, or wicked?*

What can be said more unfitly? What greater reproach can be cast upon a King (who ought to be a living Law, a breathing Law, as also the Keeper of the Law by way of conservation and protection)

Aliqui a fine, & jugo deducunt, qui nullis legum vinculis tenentur aut jugo.

Alii a proficere deducunt, quasi significet hominem qui ad nihil sit utilis.

Merc.

protection) then to call him Belial, or one that will not keep the Law at all by way of observation? There are two wayes of keeping the Law, First, By Conservation; so Kings preserve the Laws that they may have their free course to others, and be obeyed by others; in which sence Kings are commonly called *Keepers of both Tables*. Secondly, By observation; and as in the former sence 'tis the prerogative of Kings to be Keepers of the Law, so it is their piety and their goodness to be Keepers of them in the latter. 'Tis possible a King may be a Keeper of the Law by Conservation, and yet not be a Keeper of it by Observation; but then he shines most bright in the sphear of his Royal Sovereignty, when he is every way a keeper of the Law of God, and (so far as they respect himself) of his own.

Further, Is it fit to say to a King, *Belial*? As *Belial* designs an unprofitable person, a man good for nothing, a man of no use; what? Upon the Throne, and yet of no use to a Nation? How high an indignity is this to Regal dignity? Kings are set up for the greatest use, for the most important services, even for the profit and advantage of mankind, especially of all within their Kingdoms and Dominions; as all are to serve them in their state, so they count it their chiefeft honour to advance the peace and profit of all their peaceable and profitable subjects: Therefore nothing can be said more dishonourably to a King then this, Thou art good for nothing, an unprofitable person, *Belial*. *Is it fit to say to a King, Thou art wicked?*

And to Princes, ye are ungodly?

The word rendred *Princes*, signifies *munificent, bountiful, free, willing*; so Princes are called, to shew what they are or should be, men of bountiful, noble, munificent, heroick, free spirits, open hearted, and openhanded; they who are so, are Princes in truth as well as in Title. The holy Spirit of God, or God the holy Spirit, is called a *Princely Spirit*, (Psal. 51. 12.) we read it *Free Spirit*; and this free Princely Spirit of God, makes all his people of a free Princely spirit, of a large heart, both as to duty Godwards, and as to charity man-wards; (Psal. 110. 3.) *In the day of thy power the people shall be willing*; they shall be as Princes; they shall serve thee as sons, not as slaves; a Royal Spirit is conveyed into them by the Spirit in the day of the Power of Jesus Christ,

Principes hic
vocantur
נריכים a li-
beralitate &
manifesticia:
quasi tu dicas
נרעך נרעך,
Druf.

Christ, or when he conquers them to the obedience of himself. By this appellation, worldly Princes, the Princes of this world are expressed in sacred language, that so their very names might minde them of being such, and of doing such things as are the ornament both of their persons and places. These two high Titles in the Text, Kings and Princes, are sometimes taken for the same; and in strictest sence, Princes are the next degree, or but one remove from Kings.

Again, There are some called Princes, who have the supream power within their own Territories. Others are called Princes, who have a delegated or derived power from Kings. The Apostle speaks of such, (1 Pet. 2. 13.) charging the Church and people of God, *to submit to every Ordinance of man for the Lords sake, whether to the King as supream; or unto Governours as sent by him, for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.* Elihu brings in both, for the fuller confirmation of his point, and the stronger conviction of Job, *Is it fit to say to a King, thou art wicked? and to Princes (who stand about his Throne, and serve him in his Government) ye are ungodly?* Ye regard neither right nor reason, neither what's fit to be done, nor what to be advised? That's the sence of the words as they are an argument from the less to the greater; If it be an uncomely and undecent thing (saith Elihu) *to say to a King thou art wicked? and to Princes ye are ungodly? How much more to him that accepteth not the persons of Princes? &c.*

Hence Note.

First, *Men are not all of a rank, or all are not of an equal state in this world.*

This Text speaks of Kings and Princes; and the most of men are inferiour not only to Kings, but to Princes. God hath not made man upon earth as *minims* in writing, all of a height; but as in the alphabet of Letters, some are longer and deeper then others; so in the Alphabet of mankind; some men are bigger and higher then others. Kings and Princes are but men, yet they are men in a great letter, or they are among men as the *Alcph* among the letters, which as it is first in order, so it signifies a Prince, a Chief, a Leader. And if the most wise God had not ordered such an inequality among men, how should order have been kept

among men? Nothing (considering the corruptions and lusts of men) can be more unequal then that equality which some have vainly contended for among men. All men would fall down into confusion, if some were not above. *That which keeps all up, is, only that some are uppermost, Kings and Princes.*

Secondly, (which is here principally aimed at,)
Note.

It is most uncomely and sinful, to revile or give reproachful words to Kings or Princes.

When we say *It is not fit*, we say less then the thing is, or then the Text intendeth; there is more evil in it then a bare unsitness, 'tis indeed a very great wickedness, and ungodliness, *to say to a King, thou art wicked, and to Princes, ye are ungodly.* To say so, is expressly against the Rule, (*Exod. 22. 28.*) *Thou shalt not revile the gods, (or, as we put in the margin, Judges) nor curse the Ruler of thy people:* And the Apostle Paul quotes this Text (*Acts 23. 5.*) when himself had slipt in that point, as he stood before the Judgement seat, and pleaded his own integrity; for when *Ananias* the high Priest commanded them that stood by to smite him on the mouth; Paul said unto him, *God shall smite thee, thou whited wall:* This drew a reproof upon him presently from them that stood by (*v. 4.*) *Revilest thou Gods high Priest?* And what doth Paul answer? (*v. 5.*) *I wist not Brethren, that he was the high Priest;* for it is written, *Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people.* There hath been much dispute about that answer, *I wist not that he was the high Priest:* Certainly Paul saw and knew that he was the high Priest; and it is as certain, that he did not tell a lye, when he said, *I wist not that he was the high Priest:* His meaning I conceive was only this, as if he had said, having received such unjust usage in the Court, as to be openly smitten in time of hearing, I confess I was in a passion, and did not consider, as I ought, that it was the high Priest; I spake rashly and unadvisedly. *I wist not,* that is, *I deliberated not with my self who it was I spake to, for I ought not to have used such language;* the Scripture also having forbidden it, which saith, *Thou shalt not curse the Ruler of thy people.* It will not bear us out, to use ill words to Magistrates, though (as Paul's case was) we are ill-used by them. *Shimei* taking the advantage of *David's* affliction, rose up to this height

height of impudence against him, mentioned with indignation by *Elihu* in the Text, he openly and to his face called him *Belial*, (2 Sam. 16. 5. 7.) *Come out thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial*: But we know what the issue was, he paid dear for it at last; though *David* forgave him at present, and did not suffer *Abishai* to take a sudden revenge, yet upon his death-bed he delivered him over to his son *Solomon*, to deal with him as he should see good. And so great is the offensiveness and unfitness of speaking thus unto a King, that the Jewes joyned it with blasphemy against God himself. We read (1 Kings 21. 13.) how two false Witnesses came against *Naboth*, saying, *Naboth blasphemed God and the King*; as much as to say, we heard *Naboth* say of the King, *Belial*; And as soon as these two had brought in their evidence against him, that he had blasphemed God and the King, they drew him out, and stoned him: Blasphemy against God was death by the expresse letter of the Law, (Lev. 24. 15, 16.) It was also death by the same Law for any man to curse his Father or his Mother (Exod. 21. 17.) And because the King is (*Pater Patriæ*) the father of his Country, it seems the cursing or blaspheming of him, was also punishable by death. The Apostle *Jude* useth an equivalent word in the Greek (*Ep. of Jude, v. 8.*) reproving a wicked Sect in those times; They fear not to blaspheme, or speak evil of Dignities: There is blasphemy against Princes, who are titular Gods, as well as against the only true God. Kings are to be feared, to be submitted to, they are to be prayed for, therefore not to be reviled. *Is it fit to say unto a King, Belial?*

Yet this doth not stop the mouths of all men from telling Kings and Princes their faults, nor doth it justify a silent dissembling of them; much less doth it open the mouthes of any to dawb Kings and Princes with the untempered mortar of flatteries; Kings are no more to be flattered then they are to be reproached. Dignities must not be spoken evil of, yet they may be prudently and humbly told of their evils, and informed of their failings plainly. When *Elijah* met *Ahab*, who said, *Art thou he that troubleth Israel?* *Elijah* answered, (1 Kings 18. 18.) *I have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy fathers house, in that ye have forsaken the Commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baal.* And we read how boldly *Elisha* carried it to the King of Israel, (2 Kings 3. 13, 14.) *What have I to do with thee? Get thee to the Prophets of thy father,*

father, and to the Prophets of thy mother : *And* Elifha said, as the Lord of Hosts liveth before whom I stand ; Surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee. Thus the Prophets dealt with much gracious severity towards mighty Princes. The Prophet *Isaiah* feared not to say (*Isa. i. 10.*) Hear the word of the Lord ye Rulers of Sodom, Give ear unto the Law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah ; implying, that the Rulers of Jerusalem were then but such as the Rulers of Sodom once were, and that the people were no better then the people of Gomorrah ; and it is conceived, that for this plainness and liberty of speech, which the Prophet *Isaiah* used toward the Princes and Rulers of Judah, he was put to death, being cut or mangled asunder with a wooden Sawe. One might think that *Ezekiel* did much forget himself, when he gave those opprobrious terms to *Zedekiah* King of Judah, (*Ezek. 21. 25.*) And thou prophane wicked Prince of Israel, whose day is come, when iniquity shall have an end ; yet he sinned not in this harsh reproof of his sin, because commanded of God to do it, and specially directed by the holy Spirit. The Prophets might not diminish a word, but must give out what God gave in. *John* the Baptist reprov'd *Herod* for *Herodias* his brother *Philips* wife, and for all the evils which he had done, (*Luke 3. 19.*) And *Jesus* Christ himself called *Herod*, Fox ; (*Luke 13. 32.*) The Prophets were often Instructed and Commissioned to prophesie against the mountains ; that is, against the Princes and Powers of the world ; and therefore take the state of the point, and of our duty about it, in these few conclusions, that we may not run upon the rocks either way ; neither upon the rock of blasphemy against Kings and Princes on the one side, nor upon the rock of flattery on the other.

First, The Power or State of Princes must never be reviled nor revell spoken of ; kingly Power and Authority is alwayes to be revered and honoured ; though the Prince be wicked, yet his Power is to be revered, and that's the purest reverence. For to reverence the power of Princes, only, because, or when they are good, and do us good, and rule every way according to our mind, this is but a piece of selfishness ; but when Princes are evill and bring evils upon us, yet to bear respect to the Power and Authority which they Exercise ; this is to honour God, and

*Regia per se
dignitas, nun-
quam non est
colenda, etiam
cum princeps
iniquus est.*

to give true submission to his ordinance. Whatsoever the person is, the power must be reverentially submitted to.

Secondly, It is high wickedness to speak evil of the persons of just and righteous Princes; that every man will acknowledge.

Thirdly, Kings and Princes must not be reproved for personal or private faults publicly. To do so is against the rule in any mans case; much more in the case of Kings and Princes.

Fourthly, Kings are not to be reproved for any of their faults, but by those who have a Call to it; that was the reason of the liberty which the old Prophets used towards Kings, they were specially commanded and Commissioned by God for it, and the peril was upon their own heads if they did it not; it is not for every one to reprove Princes, but for those that are called to it.

Lastly, Even those that are called to it must do it with much submission; though they must not do it to halves and deceitfully, yet they are to do it respectfully. It is not fit to say to a King, *Belial*; such rough and unhewne language is not for Princes: their faults must only be insinuated, if that may serve, as *Nathan* dealt with *David*, who though he knew what his sin was, yet he did not say to him, *Thou murderer, thou Adulterer*, but intimated the matter by a parable, and made him covertly, or in a third person charge himselfe, before he charged him, or applied the parable personally to him; with, *Thou art the man*. When *Miriam* the Sister and *Aaron* the Brother of *Moses* spake against him, because of the *Ethiopian* woman whom he had married (*Numb. 12. 1.*) though they were thus neerely related, yet speaking irreverently of *Moses* the Chiefe Magistrate, the Lord sayd to them (*v. 8.*) *Wherefore were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?* Yet how common is this sin? the tongues of men walke exceeding loosely in their discourses about the persons and powers of Princes; And we every where find most pleased to heare well of themselves, and ill of others, or to speake well of themselves, and ill of others, and the higher they are who are spoken of, or of whom they speake evil, the more they are pleased both in hearing and speaking evil of them: How unruly are their tongues, who cannot forbear their rulers! Thus much of *Elihu's* question, as it is resolved into a Negative proposition, *It is not fit to say to a King, thou art ungodly*. We may further consider it as an argument from the greater to the lesse, to prove, That it is a most wicked,

wicked thing to speake a word unduely of God. *Is it fit to say to a King, Thou are wicked? and to Princes, ye are ungodly?*

Vers. 19. *How much lesse to him that accepteth not the persons of Princes?*

Who is that? The words are a cleare Periphrasis of God, he accepts not the persons of Princes. As if *Elihu* had said; the Kings and Princes of the earth, expect such great respect from their subjects, that no man should dare to censure them or speake evill of them, though they doe evill, or deale unjustly; how much more unfit is it to speake evill of God, or to charge his government with injustice, who never doth any evill, all whole wayes are not only just, but justice. He that accepteth not the persons of Princes, who are the greatest of men, can have neither will nor motive to deale unjustly with any man. I shall not stay to shew what it is to accept persons? because that hath been shewed at the 7th verse of the 13th Chapter, as also Chapter 32. 21. only I'll give it in one word; To accept persons is to have more respect to the man then to the matter; and that's a very common fault among men, and as commonly condemned by God. 'Tis a received axiom, *He that would or doth put on the person of a Judge, must put off the person of a friend*; that is, he must not be sway'd by any respect whatsoever of friendship, or allyance, but must judge purely as the cause deserveth.

Nor shall I stay to urge the greatness of the sin of speaking any thing uncomely of God, that also hath been spoken to in many former passages of this Chapter. Only from these words, *How much lesse to him that accepteth not the person of Princes?*

Note First.

That which ought not to be done or spoken to the greatest of men, ought much lesse to be either done or spoken to God.

The reason is, because, first, God is infinitely more to be revered then any man. Secondly, because God is infinitely more able to take vengeance, and certainly will, of any that shall doe or speake evill to him, then the greatest among the children of men. Yet how many are there who dare not offend a man, not a great man especially, either by word or deed, who are not afraid by

by both to offend and provoke the great God? O remember, the force of this text; If it be not fit to speake unduely of Princes, How much lesse of him that *accepteth not the persons of Princes?*

Hence note, Secondly.
God is no acceptor of persons.

He hath no respect to Princes in prejudice to truth and righteousness, *but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness* (be he never so poore) *is accepted with him*, (Acts 10. 35.) and in every nation he that feareth him not, but worketh unrighteousnesse (be he never so great) is unacceptable yea abominable to him. The Scripture often attributes this glory to God, (Deut: 10. 17. 2 Chron: 19. 7. Gal: 2. 6. Col: 3. 25.) And as it is the glory of God, that he is no acceptor of persons, so it is the duty of man (Deut: 1. 17.) Judgement must proceed and conclude with respect to the rule, and command of God, not with respect to the persons of men, or our relations to them. Levi was highly commended for this (Deut: 33. 9.) *who sayd unto his father and to his mother, I have not seene him; neither did he acknowledge his brethren, nor knew his owne children, &c.* When man accepteth not the persons of men he acteth most like God, of whom Elihu saith, *He accepteth not the persons of Princes,*

Nor regardeth the rich more then the poore.

That's a further description of God; He doth not regard, that is, acknowledge or know the one more then the other; He is (in the best things) as communicative to, and converseth as familiarly with the poore as the rich; yea, he doth not value or prize the rich man more then the poore; the poor man is worth as much as the rich man in Gods account; suppose the rich man worth thousands, yea ten thousands of gold and silver, and the poore man so poore that he is not worth a shilling, yet in the account of God the poor man is worth as much as the rich man.

The Scripture speakes of two sorts both of rich and poor men; There are men rich in spiritualls, such Christ intimates, who are (Luke 12. 20.) *rich towards God*, or as he speakes of the Church of Smyrna (Rev: 2. 9.) *rich in grace, I know thy poverty, but thou art rich*; That is, I know thou art poor in earthly pelfe, but rich in spiritualls. The Apostle James puts the question (Chap: 2. 5.) *Have not*
God

God chosen the poore of this world rich in faith, and heires of the kingdome. Now, it is most certaine, that God regardeth the rich in spiritualls, more then the poore in spiritualls, he highly regardeth those that are poore in spirit, and pronounceth them blessed (*Math: 5. 3.*) for theirs is the kingdome of heaven; But he regardeth not those who are poore in spiritualls; not them especially who boast of their spirituall riches when they have none (they that have them are thankfull for them, they do not boast of them) as the Church of *Laodicea* did, of whom Christ sayd (*Rev: 3. 16, 17.*) *I will spew thee out of my mouth, because thou sayest I am rich & increased in goods, and knowest not that thou art poore.* Thus you see, there are a sort of rich men, whom Christ regardeth more then the poore of that sort. But as poore and rich are distinguished meere-ly by aboundance and want, by the smallness and greatness of their portion in the things of this world, as *Dives* and *Lazarus* in the parable were, so he regardeth not the rich more then the poore. When a poor man is gracious as wel as poore, God regardeth him more then any rich man who hath no grace; And when either both have grace alike, or both are alike without grace, he regardeth them both alike. When rich and poore have grace, they are both greatly regarded, and when neither of them have grace, neither of them are at all regarded by the God of all grace. Thus 'tis plaine, *God regardeth the rich no more then the poore, nor the poore any whit lesse then the rich.*

*Vid est dives opulentus; qui-
dam volunt de-
duci a VV
servando quod
multos servare
et jurari possit,
vel a VV cla-
mando quod o-
pulent liberius
et audacius
loquantur.*

The word rendred *rich*, signifieth also *bountifull* (*Isa: 32. 5.*) 'Tis also rendred, *The helpfull, the saving man*; for though rich men are not alwayes helpfull with their riches, nor ready to save others in distresse; yet rich men may doe both: they have alwayes in their hand power and usuall opportunity to be helpfull to the poore, and to save the distressed. And surely, *as the Lord regardeth not the rich more then the poore*; so he regardeth those rich men least of all, who have no regard to helpe and save the poore. Once more, Some derive the word which we translate *rich*, from a roote which signifieth to *clamour*, or to speake out and boldly, which complyes wel with that sentence of *Solomon* (*Pro: 18. 23.*) *The poore useth entreaties* (that is, he speaketh humbly or by way of supplication) *but the rich answereth roughly.* And as God regardeth not the rich more then the poore, so he regardeth those rich men least, who speake loudly and roughly to the poore. Having thus

thus opened the aſſertion of *Elihu*, that *God regardeth not the rich more then the poore* ; let us conſider , The reaſon of it in the next words.

For they are all the work of his hands.

As if he had ſayd, God cannot but deal impartially with all, becauſe all are the work of his hands : what reaſon hath he to reſpect one more then another, ſeeing the one is no more to him then t^other, they are all the work of his hands. Man as man is *the off-ſpring of God* (Acts 17. 28.) He is alſo *the work of his hands* ; that is, man is made by his power ; As man deſcendeth from man, ſo he is called the fruit of the womb ; but as man is the off-ſpring of God, ſo he is called the worke of his hands, and his hands have wrought the poore man as well as the rich ; *They are all the work of his hands* in a two-fold reſpect.

Fiſt , In their naturall conſtitution ; God hath moulded them in the ſame faſhion, he hath given each of them a body and a ſoule ; A body fram'd of the ſame parts ; a ſoule conſiſting, of the ſame powers. God hath beſtowed as much care and coſt upon the making of a poore mans body and ſoule, as upon the rich mans. The richeſt man in the world, cannot boaſt that he hath any one member in his body or faculty in his ſoule , more then a poore man hath.

Secondly , Look upon the rich and poore in their Civil ſtate, and ſo likewiſe they are the work of his hands : and that I conceive, is here intended as much as, if not more, then the former ; not only is God the maker of the poore and of the rich in their naturall ſtate, ſoule and body ; but as poore, and rich, he is the maker of them ; that is, he maketh one man poore, and another man rich, as himſelfe pleaſeth. (Prov. 22. 2.) *The rich and the poore meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.* He hath made them men, and he hath made them rich or poore men. There is as much of the power and wiſdome of God ſeene in making ſome men poore and others rich, as there is in making them men ; yea God thinks himſelfe as much honoured in our acknowledgements that the poore with their poverty , as that the rich with all their riches, *are the work of his hands.*

Hence Note.

Fiſt, *Poor men are as much the work of God as the rich.*

M m m m

As

As they have the same nature, and are of the same matter, as they are both made of the same stuff, or are both of a piece, so they have the same maker ; and their maker hath been at as much charge in the making of the one, as in the making of the other ; yea, and usually, the poore man yeilds him a better rent, and brings more into his Treasury then the rich man doth.

Secondly Note.

It is the Lord who makes men poor, and makes men rich.

Agur prayed (*Prov. 30. 8.*) *Give me neither poverty nor riches.* *Agur* knew poverty was a gift of God as well as riches. It hath been said (though prophanely) *Every man is the fashioner of his own fortune, or the contriver of his own condition.* Some who acknowledge God hath made them men, think they have made themselves rich, or great men ; and we commonly look on those who fail in their worldly Estates, that they have made themselves poor and low in the world. I grant, there is a sense wherein men make themselves rich, and make themselves poor ; that is, when they do either by their sins. God is not so engaged in the making of a man rich, when he enricheth himself by his sin, by deceiving or oppressing his brethren, as when he groweth rich in a way of righteousness : He that is enriched by oppression, or deceit, or sets his nest on high by flattery, or by fraud, cannot thank God for his riches, or honours ; and if he doth, he blasphemously makes God a partner in those sins by which he hath got his riches and honours. For though it be a truth that there is a hand of God in his gettings, (for all the craft, and policy, and oppression which men use, will never be able to make them either rich or great, if God did not permit and order it so) yet the heart of God is not with him in it, and God will not own his own hand in giving them wealth or power, further then as they are a testimony against them, of his goodness, and their ingratitude. We may also say of some poor men, they have made themselves poor, not God ; He made *Job* poor, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away,* was his humble acknowledgement (*chap. 1. 21.*) but there are some, of whom we cannot so much say God hath made them poor by his sad providences to them, as that they have made themselves poor by their idleness and improvidence, or by their prodigality and vain profuseness ; yet even of such poor men we may truly say, there

there be a righteous hand of God upon them in leaving or giving them up to the lusts of their own heart, their laziness, or lavishness, which produce their utter undoing, and bring them to a morsel of bread. So that let men be in what condition they will, the Lord is the former of it. The diligent hand maketh rich, but it is with the blessing of God; and when an indigent man becomes poor, it is the curse of God upon him for his sin, as well as the consequent of his sin. Yea, when an honest diligent man becomes poor, (that's the case of some) it is the Lords with-holding of his blessing, which makes all his labours fruitless and successless; such a man is indeed one of God's poor, or a poor man of God's making; and God will surely make the poverty of such a man (if he continue in a believing dependence upon him, and in an humble submission to him, if he know how to want as well as to abound, how to be hungry as well as to be full, and in every estate hath learned therewith to be content, as the holy Apostle had, then (I say) God will surely make the poverty of such a man better to him than riches, or the largest portion of this worlds enjoyment. The poor of God's special making, are under his special keeping and blessing: As they have but little, so they want nothing; God himself will always be not only enough, but all to them.

Take two further inferences from the whole verse.

First,

Princes, great and rich men must not expect to fare better with God because of their greatness or riches. For,

He doth not regard the rich more than the poor.

Secondly,

The meanest man needs not fear that he shall fare the worse before God for his meanness.

The most high God will not overlook those in a low estate, he regardeth the poor as well as the rich; and that's matter of great comfort to the poor, when disregarded by the rich. Though the Lord doth not make all men of an equal respect in the world, 'tis his will that some men should be more regarded by men than others are, yet himself (in the sence opened) beareth an equal respect to them all; *He regardeth not the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands.*

J O B. Chap. 34. Vers. 20, 21, 22.

In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and pass away: and the mighty shall be taken away without hands.

For his eyes are upon the wayes of man, and he seeth all his doings.

There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

IN these three verses *Elihu* doth two things principally; First, He sets forth the judgements of God; Secondly, He gives an account of the equity of them. He sets forth the judgements of God,

First, More generally, Upon People and Nations.

Secondly, Upon Princes and Governours; All this in the 20th verse. And in this judgement of God upon Nations, we may take notice,

First, Of the nature of it, and how it is described: and that is laid down three wayes. * First, *They shall die*. Secondly, *They shall be troubled*. Thirdly, *They shall pass away*. Under these Notions the judgement of God upon People and Nations is exprest.

Secondly, We may here consider the suddenness of all this, *In a moment they shall die*.

Thirdly, We may consider the season, (or rather as to man, the unseasonableness) of it, it shall be (though in a dreaming time) when they little dream of it; *The people shall be troubled at midnight*. Thus we have the judgement or sad dispensation of God described in this 20th verse, both as to the acts of it, and likewise as to the manner of it upon the people.

Elihu having shewed the judgement of God upon the people in the former part of this 20th verse, declares also his judgement upon the Princes in the latter end of it; *The mighty shall be taken away without hand*. Where we see; First, How Princes are exprest or called, *They are the mighty*. Secondly, What kinde of judgement befallerh them, *They are taken away*. Thirdly, The manner how this is brought about, *They are taken away without hand*.

Elihu

From the matter of the judgement of God both upon people and Princes, *Elihu* proceeds to give the reason why the Lord deals thus with both; This he doth in the two verses following.

First, Because of their sin; *They are workers of iniquity*; in the close of the 22th verse.

Secondly, Because, as they are workers of iniquity, so God is fully acquainted with all their iniquity, &c. *He seeth all their works*, and the iniquity of their works, nothing can cover it or them from his sight; and therefore, as *Elihu* asserts the omniscience of God positively in the 21th verse, so negatively in the 22th verse, *There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.* Now seeing the works of those Nations and Princes were naught, and the naughtiness of them was evident to God, how could he but punish them? And how just and righteous is he in punishing of them? By all this *Elihu* clears his general Assertion, or the point he drives at all this chapter over, namely, to prove that God is righteous; against which position, he tells us before, *Job* having spoken dangerously, he was engaged to maintain it vigorously; which he doth here, especially in that eminent branch of it, mentioned at the 19th verse, *That he accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more then the poor.* For, Princes as well as common people fall under his hand. So much for the parts and resolution of these three verses, as also for the general scope of them.

Yet before I go on to the particular explication of them, I would only minde the Reader of another Translation of the whole 20th verse, which varieth somewhat from ours, rendring it as a description of the judgement of God upon Princes, by the violence of the people; whereas according to our Translation, it is a description of the judgement of God both upon people and Princes. The Translation I mean, is that of the Vulgar Latine, which runs in this form.

Vers. 20. *Suddenly shall they die, at midnight the people shall be in a tumult, and shall pass over, and take away the violent man without hand.*

Subito morientur & in media nocte turbabuntur populi, & pertransibunt, & auferent violentum absque manu.
their Vulg.

This Reading, and the expositions given upon it, prove, That God is so far from accepting the persons of Princes, that he does not only tell them their own, and reprove them to their face for their

their wickedness and Apostacy (as was shewed from the former reading of the 18th verse) but deprives them also of their dignity, and pulls them from their power; And he doth it in such a manner, that every man may understand and see the hand of God in it, because they see no hands in it. The less of man appears in any work of providence, whether it be in a way of mercy or of judgement, the more of God is to be acknowledged in it: and where nothing of man appeareth, all, or the whole must be attributed unto God. The judgement which *Elihu* speaks of here, seems (according to this Interpretation) to have much of man in it; yet because the men supposed to be in it, are looked upon as such as can do little in it, or ought to do nothing in it, therefore 'tis said to be done *without hands*. Histories have given many examples, and dreadful instances of such calamities falling upon Princes by the rising of the people; and then they are said to be *taken away*

Without hand,

That is, Without any foreseen appearance of such a mischief; a hand which was not thought of being lifted up against them. It is said of wicked *Zimri*, who slew his master, that when he saw the people conspire against him, and the City taken, *he went into the Palace of the King's house, and (in the heat of his rage) set it on fire, and burnt the Kings house over him, and died,* (1 Kin. 16. 18.) *Justine* reports the like conclusion (upon a like occasion) of *Sardanapalm*, that effeminate and voluptuous Monarch of the Assyrian Empire. They who prosecute this Translation, conceive *Elihu* reflecting upon *Job* in all this, who was very uncivilly treated by his own people, from whom he had deserved highest respects, as he complained at the 30th chapter, they raised up against him the wayes of their destruction; they used him very rudely, even despightfully; and he was in a pining consuming condition, as a man taken away without hand. But I shall not insist upon this reading, but take the words according to the scope before given, as a description of a mixt judgement from God; a judgement partly upon the people, and partly upon Princes, a judgement upon the many, and a judgement upon the mighty; *In a moment shall they die.*

In a moment.

The Text is, *a moment they die*; Not, that they shall die but a moment,

moment, or be only for a moment dead, but they shall die before a moment is over; there is an Elipsis of the preposition [*Beth*], in the Hebrew, which we supply in our Translation, *In a moment they shall die*: A moment is the least particle or parcel of time; we cannot imagine any thing shorter than a moment, 'tis the very point of time, (*Psal.* 30. 5.) *His anger endureth for a moment*, (saith David, when he would shew how very short (comparatively) the anger of God towards his people is) *but in his favour is life*: Thus Solomon (*Prov.* 2. 19.) *He that speaketh truth, his tongue shall be established; but a lying tongue is for a moment*: A lye cannot last long; he that speaks truth, what he speaks to day, is good to morrow, and to morrow, and will be good for ever; but a lying tongue is for a moment; that is, his lies will be discovered, and usually they are quickly discovered; though he live long to tell lies, or doth nothing but tell lies as long as he liveth, yet his lyes are not long lived. Job describing the joy of the hypocrite (*chap.* 20. 5.) saith, *It is but for a moment*; like a fire of thorns, a blaze and gone: when the Apostle would strengthen and encourage the hearts of believers against all the troubles and sorrows of this present life, he calls them, (*2 Cor.* 4. 17.) *First, light, Secondly, short*; *Our light afflictions that are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*. And that we might know how quick the devil was at his work with Christ, the Scripture saith (*Luke* 4. 5.) *He shewed him all the Kingdoms of the world in a moment of time*. As to shew the instantaneouſness of our change from death to life in the resurrection, it is said, (*1 Cor.* 15. 52.) *In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last Trump, we shall be changed*: So to shew the extream suddenness of these mens change from life to death, it is said here, *In a moment*

They shall die.

They? Who? Both great and small; one and another of them shall die, or be swept away by death in a moment. There is a twofold death;

First, Natural; When either sickness or old age dissolves the earthly house of this tabernacle: The natural death of some is very lingring and slow, others are suddenly snatcht away, they die in a moment.

Secondly,

Secondly, There is a violent death ; thus many are taken away by the sword Martial, or Civil, others casually : The Text is true both of natural and violent death, either of them may overtake us in a moment, yet I conceive the latter is here chiefly intended, *In a moment shall they die* ; that is, some sudden destruction shall come upon them, they shall be surprized by an unlooked for disaster, and removed out of the world, while they had not a thought of their removal.

Hence Note.

First, *Death of any sort, may befall all sorts of men.*

None can plead exemption or privilege from the grave. It is appointed to men once to die ; most die a natural death, and any man may die a violent death ; who knows how he shall go out of this world ? Christ told *Peter*, (*John 21. 18.*) *When thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorifie God.* And what kinde of death was that ? The Church History assureth us, 'twas a violent death. He (as his master Jesus Christ) was nailed to a Cross, and dyed. *We come but one way into the world, but there are a thousand wayes of going out.*

Note Secondly.

Death comes suddenly upon many men, and may upon all men.

The whole life of the longest liver in this world, is but a moment, compared to eternity ; and there is not any moment of our life, but (with respect to second causes) we are subject to death in it : We alwayes in some sense (though at some times more) carry our lives in our hand, and how soon, or by what hand they may be snatched out of ours, we know not.

Now if our whole life be but a moment, and we subject to death every moment, how should we stand prepared for death every moment ? And how sad is it to think, that they who may die the next moment, should for dayes, and weeks, and moneths, and years, never prepare for death ? Most are loth to think of the end of their lives, till they are nearer the end of them ; yet no man knoweth how near he is to the end of his life. Many put off the thoughts of death till it cometh, yet none can put off the coming of

of death; they would remove the meditation of death to the fall of their leaf, to the winter, and worst of their old age, yet they are not able to remove death one moment from the Spring and best of their youth.

Note, Thirdly.

Violent death, by the sore and severe judgement of God, often sweeps multitudes away in a moment.

God can thrust whole throngs of men, yea whole Nations into their graves together; it is said (*Numb. 16. 21.*) of *Corah* and his companions, *The earth did cover, or swallow them up in a moment*: And the Lord commanded *Moses*, to say unto the children of *Israel* (*Exod. 33. 5.*) *ye are a stiff-necked people; I will come up into the midst of thee in a moment, and consume thee*: As if the Lord had said, *I will take no long time for it, I can quickly dispatch you; how many soever there are of you, I will do it in a moment*. We have a like description of the sudden and quick dispatch of men at the Lord's word of Command, (*Psal. 73. 19.*) *How are they brought into desolation, as in a moment, they are utterly consumed with terrors*? The final ruine of *Babylon* was thus prophesied (*Isa. 47. 9.*) *These two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood, they shall come upon thee in their perfection*; Thou shalt utterly be destroyed, and perish at once for ever. The Prophet *Jeremiah* (*Lam. 4. 6.*) bewayled the destruction of *Jerusalem*, whose calamity was greater then that of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, which God destroyed in a moment: *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* were great Cities, yet how soon consumed! In some sense, there is a greater evil in a lingring destruction, then in a speedy one; so the Prophet aggravates death by famine, beyond death by fire; because to die by famine is a lingring death. *Cesar* being warned that some lay in wait to destroy him suddenly, slighted it, and said, unexpected death is most desireable: And that's the lot of many great men; to which some conceive the Psalmist had respect, when he said, (*Psal. 82. 7.*) *Ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the Princes*; that is, suddenly. But though in some sence a speedy death is more eligible then a lingring one, yet in many respects, to die suddenly, or in a moment, may be concluded a far greater judgement, then to see death coming by degrees, and destruction walking towards us step by step. So-

lomon (Prov. 1. 27.) speaks of *swift destruction, of destruction coming like a whirlwind*; swift destruction overtakes them who are slow paced to receive and obey instruction. Thus the Lord can deal both with persons and with Nations; he needs not make any delays, nor take time to do it, their destruction shall come (if he will send it) in a day, in an hour, yea, *in a moment shall they die*,

And the people shall be troubled at midnight.

וְעַם
consociatio
hominum.

וְעַם a ver-
bo וַיַּד
vide-
tur significare
laxationem
compagum.

That is, the body, or generality of the people, the *many shall be troubled*; they shall be as men amazed, or as the Metaphor imports, they shall be disjoynted; Men associated under due Laws of Government, are as so many members of a well compacted Body; but when broken and scattered, they are like a body whose members are dislocated, or out of joynt, unfit for any use or service. And as there is a laxation of the members of the body, a disjoynting of the bones, so there is a disjoynting of the faculties of the minde; In times of great trouble, not only is the body Politick, which consists of many men, but the minde of every body, or of every single man is much out of joynt. The word is applied to those great concussions of the world (Psal. 18. 17.) *The earth shook and trembled, the foundations also of the hills were moved, and were shaken at the presence of the Lord, because he was wroth*; which we may interpret of the Princes and Powers of the earth, who are as hills and mountains; if the Lord do but touch them in anger, they move, yea tremble. The word is applied also to the waves of the Sea, (Jer. 5. 22.) which *roar, and toss themselves*; we commonly say, as in the Text, *the Sea is troubled, or 'tis a troubled Sea, a tossing Sea*. That expression is also common among us, when we see a man much disquieted, *he is (we say) in a great toss*; even as a ship at Sea upon the proud waves. Thus saith *Elihu*, the people shall be in a toss, they shall feel a storm in their mindes, sudden gusts of fear and sorrow shall carry them they know not whither; or they shall be lifted up to Heaven in vain confidences, and then fall down to hell in despairing thoughts, as the tempest at Sea is described in the 107th Psalm. There is yet another rendring of the Text, in allusion to Drunkards, who are overcome with wine, (Jer. 25. 16.) *And they shall drink, and be moved, and be mad*; the word which we translate *move*, is that in the Text; now we know drunkenness moves men, and puts all

all into diſorder and diſquietment: Thus the people (through the fierce anger of God, and the wine of aſtoniſhment which he gives them to drink) ſhall be moved, they ſhall reel to and fro, and ſtagger like a drunken man. Great troubles and afflictions are called in Scripture the wine of aſtoniſhment, becauſe they make many ſay and do they ſcarce know what; great troubles bereave men not only of their comforts, but of their reaſon; they do not only ſtraiten them, but aſtoniſh them. They who have drowned their wits in cups of worldly pleaſure, may ſoon have them drowned in full and overflowing cups of worldly ſorrow.

Befides this Expoſition of the peoples being troubled with perplexity, fear, and doubt, with anxiety, and uncertainty of ſpirit what to do, I ſay, beſides this, there is another way of being troubled, upon which ſome Expoſitors ſpecially inſiſt. *The people ſhall be troubled*; that is, ſhall be in a tumult; they ſhall riſe up ſeditiouſly, and (as we ſay) *make a commotion*, they ſhall gather together as many waters, with a roaring noiſe. Many people, are compared to many Waters; and there is ſometimes a confluence, a great confluence or flood of them tumbling together: The Poet tells us elegantly what rude work a people make when they riſe up like a flood of troubled waters. *Their rage* (ſaith he) *findes out weapons, one throws ſtones, another throws firebrands, till all's in a ſad combuſtion*: Theſe waters, if let alone, may quickly put all into a flame. The Pſalmiſt aſcribes the quieting of the Sea, and the quieting of the people to God in one verſe; yea, I conceive the one is but the explication of the other, (Pſal. 65. 7.) *Which ſtill leth the noiſe of the Seas, the noiſe of their waves, and the tumult of their people*. Thus ſaith *Elihu*, the people ſhall be in a tumult, (this ſuits with that expoſition firſt given) ready to deſtroy whomſoever they meet next, or thoſe eſpecially who never did nor meant them any other hurt but to keep the peace, or bridle their headſtrong fury.

Yet, I rather adhere to the former Interpretation, *The people ſhall be troubled*, that is, they ſhall be in a great conſternation of ſpirit, neither being able (which they ſeldom are) to adviſe themſelves what to do, nor fit to receive (which they ſeldom will) advice from others. And (as *Elihu* adds) they ſhall be thus troubled

At midnight.

Or, *In the half of the night*, as the words may be rendred;

N n n n 2

that's

*de voluti mag-
no in populo
cum ſepe co-
orta eſt
Seditio, ſc viri-
que animi ig-
nobile vulgus,
ſanque ſaces
ſc ſara volant
furor arma mi-
niſtrat. Virg.
Æneid. 1.*

that's a great aggravation of the judgement. The night is a time of rest, and midnight is the time of deepest rest; so that for the people to be in a tumult, or troubled at midnight, is to be overtaken with matter of fear, when fear seemed furthest off, or when they suspected nothing to make them afraid. *David* saith of some, (*Psal.* 3. 5.) *There were they in great fear, where no fear was.* To fear at midnight, is to fear when usually no fear is, that is, when people are at rest in their beds: And so to say, *the people shall be troubled at midnight*, signifieth either, First, the coming of trouble upon a secure people, upon a people who thought themselves, and while they thought themselves not only out of the noise, but reach of danger: Or secondly, It may signifie the coming of trouble upon a people altogether unfit to help themselves; when a man is asleep, he cannot give counsel how to prevent danger, and while he is in his bed, he is in no posture to oppose it. All this may well be included in what *Elihu* saith, *The people shall be troubled at midnight.*

*Cum maxime
securi.*

Hence Note. First,
There are National troubles as well as personal.

God can scare not only a family, or this and that particular man, but a whole people at once; he cannot only make a childe, or a woman, but a multitude, yea an Army of mighty men tremble like a childe, and faint as the weakest woman. A people are many, yet every man shall be as if he were alone, or but one in the midst of innumerable dangers, and of a thousand deaths. *Moses* in his Song foresaw the dread of Nations upon the report of the Lord's miraculous conduct of Israel through the red Sea, (*Exod.* 15. 14, 15, 16.) *The people shall hear, and be afraid; sorrow shall take hold on the inhabitants of Palestina, all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away.* And when Christ speaks of those dreadful Prognosticks of his coming, he not only saith, *There shall be signes in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars, but upon the Earth distress of Nations, with perplexity,* (*Luke* 21. 25.)

Secondly, Observe.

Both personal and publick troubles are at the command of God, as both publick and personal peace are.

A people as well as a person, may and shall be troubled, even
at

at the midnight of their greateſt ſecurity, if God give the word. *I make peace* (ſaith the Lord, *Iſa: 45. 7.*) *and create evill*; that is, the evill of trouble. There will be occaſion afterward to ſpeak further of this poynt from thoſe words (*v. 29.*) *When he giveth quietneſs, who can give trouble, and when he hideth his face, who can behold him? Whether it be done againſt a nation, or againſt a man only; trouble of all ſorts is at the command of God*; if he ſaith to ſuch or ſuch a miſchiefe, goe to a nation, it will goe; if he bid the ſword trouble them, if he bid peſtilence trouble them, if he bid famine trouble them, if he bid their owne diviſions trouble them, *the people ſhall be troubled; yea, they ſhall be troubled at midnight.*

Whence note, Thirdly.

Trouble takes or ſeazeth upon many when they leaſt expect it.

God can ſend trouble when no man thinks of it. At midnight every one is in bed, all are for reſt and quiet. The Lord uſually executes his judgements upon the unwary world, upon a ſecure people (*Exod: 12. 29.*) *At midnight the Lord ſmote all the firſt-borne in the land of Egypt, &c. And Pharoah roſe up in the night, he and all his ſervants, and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt.* We read alſo (*2 Kings 19. 35.*) *In that night the Angel of the Lord went out and ſmote in the campe of the Aſſyrians, an hundred fourſcore and five thouſand.* It was not a day-battel, but a night-battel; When they were all gone into their tents, and were at reſt, when the Army was ſecure; In that night did the Lord fight them by an Angel, and made a mighty ſlaughter among them. *Belſhazzar king of the Chaldeans was ſlaine in the night* (*Dan: 5. 30.*) *even in that night wherein he made a feaſt to a thouſand of his Lords, and dranke wine before the thouſand* (*v. 1.*) In that night not only of his ſecurity, but of his jollity and ſenſuality, when he had even drowned himſelfe and his great Lords with wine and belly-cheare, in that very night the City was broken up, and *Belſhazzar ſlaine*; Hiſtory tells us what dreadfull work was made upon the *Babylonians* that night. The great Judgement day is ſo deſcribed; *Jeſus Chriſt will, at laſt, trouble the world at midnight; The Day of the Lord ſo cometh* (ſaith the Apoſtle, *1 Theſ: 5. 2.*) *as a thiefe in the night; when they ſhall ſay peace and ſafety, then ſudden deſtruction cometh upon them, &c.* Chriſt him-

himselfe shadowing his coming under the parable of the ten Virgins, who all slumbred and slept, tells us (*Math: 25. 6.*) *At midnight there was a cry made, Behold the Bridegroome cometh, goe ye out to meete him.* Though some were in a better condition then others, some wise, some foolish, yet all slept, and it was a kind of midnight to them all. Christ will come, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and then there will be a dreadfull Cry among the secure drowsie world. Therefore the Counsell of Christ is most proper (*Math: 13. 35.*) *Watch, because ye know not at what houre your Master may come, whether at even, or at midnight, or at Cock-crowing, or in the morning.* It is hard to be put to it at midnight, 'tis sad to be in a sleepey or slumbring condition when evill comes. The Gospel sheweth us, how much that man was troubled, when his neighbour came to borrow bread of him at midnight (*Luke 11. 5. 7.*) *Trouble me not, my children are with me in bed, I cannot rise and give thee.* If it be matter of trouble to be called out of our bed to doe a courtesie for a friend at midnight, O what will it be to be called up to Judgement, or to be surprized with any Judgement at midnight! Therefore prepare and be ready for all changes. *At midnight the people shall be troubled,*

And passe away.

These words are a third part of the description of the Judgement of God upon a people; *they shall die, they shall be troubled, they shall passe away*; that is, some of them shall die, all shall be troubled, others *shall passe away*. There is a three-fold notion of *passing away*.

First, Some expound it thus, They shall be carried captive out of their own Country; This with the former two make up a perfect Judgement upon any people; Some shall die, or be slaine, all shall be troubled and vexed, they shall be at their wits end, and the rest shall be carried away captive.

Secondly, *They shall pass away*; that is, they shall pass into their graves; the forme of speech here used may well beare that sense, for death is a passing away, a passing out of this world (*Psal: 37.*

Transire intelligo, non pro migrare aliud, sed pro abire in sepulchrum.
Merc:

36.) *Loe he passed away and was gone*, that is, he died; And that which is as death to the heavens and the earth (their great change when ever it shall be) is called a *passing away* (*Math: 5. 18.*) *Till heaven and earth passe away, one jot or one tittle shall in*

no wise passe away from the Law till all be fullfilled ; that is, the Law shall stand in force as long as the world stands. Thus to passe away is to die. But I conceive, we are to expound this third branch of the Judgement distinctly from the former two, and therefore for as much as we have death in the first words, it will not be proper to take in death here againe, or to expound *passing away* by dying. The third notion, of, *they shall passe away*, is, they shall run or flee for it, they know not whether, they shall flee for their lives from the danger impending over them. As some shall die, and all be troubled, so not a few shall endeavour to save their lives by flight. Christ in the Gospel foretold the great troubles and afflictions which should come upon *Jerusalem*, and in them there was a sad concurrence or meeting of these three Judgements in the text. For when after forty yeares the *Romans* invaded and ruin'd their City, many dyed & were destroyed by sword and famine, all the people were troubled ; Oh in whar a hurry were they to see the *Romane Eagle* displayed before their Gates ! and then they *passed away* ; that is, as many as could, withdrew and got out of the danger. It is reported in history, that before the Seidge of that City, a voyce was heard in *Jerusalem*, saying, (*Migremus hinc*) *let us passe from hence*, they who believed that warning, departed soone after ; And as some passed away before the Judgement came, so when it was come, many were striving to be gone, or to passe away. Therefore Christ admonished them. (*Math: 24. 20.*) *Pray that your flight be not in the winter, nor on the Sabbath day.* I conceive, we are to understand this text distinctly of such a passing away. *In a moment shall they die, and the people shall be troubled at midnight, and passe away* ; they shall doe what they can to secure themselves by out-running the danger.

Note from it, First.

God hath variety of meanes to humble a sinfull people.

Into how many wayes doe the Judgements of God divide themselves ; severall persons beare severall parts ; here is death to many, trouble to all, flight to some. That, in the Prophet, answers it fully (*Jer: 15. 1.*) where the Lord protesting that nothing (no not the intercession of *Moses* and *Samuel*) should take him off from his resolve against that people, saith, *Such as are for death to death, and such as are for the sword to the sword, and such as are for the famine to the famine, and such as are for the captivity*

to

here 'tis applyable only to strong and mighty men, of whom yet there are three sorts.

First, Some are men of a mighty arme.

Secondly, Others are mighty in Armes.

Thirdly, There are men mighty in Authority.

The first of these is a natural mighty man, he hath a mighty arme, a strong body, or he excells in bodily strength. The second is a marshall mighty man, a souldier, a man of warre. The third is the Magistratall mighty man, he is cloathed with power both to punish and reward: Possibly he may have no bodily might, yea, possibly he is no souldier, yet a man of such power he is, that he commands whole Nations. Now take the word *Mighty* in any of these three senses, and it is a truth, *the mighty shall be taken away*, the mighty in strength of the Arme, the mighty in strength of Arnyes, the mighty in power and dignity, are by the hand of the Almighty God

taken away.

They shall take them away (saith the Hebrew text) that is, say וְיִסְרֹף אֱלֹהִים some (according to the first translation mentioned) *the people shall* et amovent po- violently take away the mighty. But by an usuall Hebraisme we tentem, imper- may read it Impersonally, *the mighty shall be taken away*, conceal- sonaliter. Pisc: ing or leaving it to be understood by whom. Like that speech to the rich man (*Luke 12.25.*) *This night doe they require thy soule of thee*, (so we put in the Margin) that is, (as the text hath it) *this night thy soule shall be required of thee*, they shall take thy soule, that is, it shall be taken away; so here they shall take away the mighty, that is, the mighty shall be taken away or removed. We may take notice of a two-fold *remove* or taking away.

First, There is a remove out of place and power; Thus a man is taken away when his authority is taken away.

Secondly, There is a removing or taking of a man out of the world; Thus they are taken away whose persons are destroyed, cut off, and perish. The mighty, both wayes or either way are often *taken away*. The persons of many mighty men have fallen, and many more of them have fallen from their places and powers. Here they are under a generall threatning, *They shall be taken away*. But how shall they be taken away? the text answers

without hand,

It is somewhat strange that they who are mighty, and have such power in their hand, should be taken away, and no hand touch them, or *without hand*. We use to say of a thing strangely gone, or gone we know not how, *It cannot be gone without hands*; yet thus the Lord deales judicially with the mighty of the world; They shall be taken away *without hand*. There may be a three-fold understanding of that expression.

First, Thus; *The mighty shall be taken away without hand*; that is, they shall have no hands to help them, or they shall be destitute of all humane helpe. Sometimes God leaves or strips the mighty naked, they who have had great power, and many thousands standing up to defend them, have not a hand for them, and so are taken away without hand, no man drawing a sword or striking a stroake for them.

Frequentius manus pro ministerio, sed frequentissime pro ope et auxilio ponitur, Pin.

Secondly, To doe a thing *without hand*, is to doe it with the smallest appearance of second causes or instruments. We are ready to say, there must be a great deale of tugging to get the mighty downe, who like Oakes are strongly rooted and highly growne, who looke like mountaines, which cannot be removed, yet (saith *Elihu*) the Lord can take them away *without hand*; that is, *easily*, without any trouble at all, little meanes or very improbable meanes being used to effect it. So then to doe a thing without hand, is to doe it as if we put no hand no stresse to it when we doe it. As they who move swiftly or lightly are sayd to goe without setting a foot on the ground (*Dan.* 8. 5.) the *He-Goate* came and touched not the ground, he did rather fly then goe. So to doe a thing, as if we did not put a hand to it, is to doe it with the greatest ease imaginable.

Abq; manu armatorum. Aquin:

Thirdly, To doe a thing without hand, is to doe it without any visible meanes at all, even by the immediate stroake or power of God. There is a hand of God in all things that are done in the world, but some things are done without any other hand, and are therefore most properly sayd to be done without hand. Thus the Lord is able to doe the greatest things, even to take mighty men from the earth, no hand of man appearing or joyning with him in the action. Now, because God usually sets instruments aworke to effect his will in the world, and to bring about his counsels, therefore in what work soever he either quite leaves or seemes to leave instruments out, that work is sayd to be done without hand. The

Manu tantum dei. Merc:

stone

stone which shall grow up to be a great mountaine, that is, the kingdome of Christ, is called *a stone cut out without hands* (Dan: 2. 34.) that is, without humane power. The kingdome of Christ shall be set up so much by the power of God without any earthly contribution, that it shall confessedly be sayd to be set up without hands. Though we ought not to neglect the coming and advancement of the kingdome of Christ in the world, yet we should not be anxiously carefull about it, when we see little or no meanes for it, yea though we see great very great meanes set against it, because *a stone cut out without hands* shall doe it.

The Apostle useth this forme of speaking, both as to eternalls and spiritualls. Concerning the former he is expresse (2. Cor: 5. 1.) *We know that when the earthly house of this tabernacle is dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternall in the heavens*; that is, a house of Gods own immediate making, a house to the making whereof man hath added nothing. The fabrick of this visible world is a house made without hands, much more is heaven, and the glorious unseene state which Saints shall have hereafter. The house above, or state of Glory is wholly of Gods making. And as our eternall estate is expressed by a house made without hands, so our spirituall estate is called by the same Apostle, *A work done without hands* (Col: 2. 11.) where having asserted our compleatness in Christ (v. 10.) he adds, *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands*. The external literal circumcision was made with hands; there was an operation of man in it, the cutting off the foreskin of the flesh, but in the spiritual circumcision, man hath no hand, it is the work of God alone; as also that effectual faith is which alwayes accompanieth it, and is therefore called (v. 12.) *the faith of the operation of God*. There is a temporary faith which we may call a faith of the operation of man, but true saving faith is the operation of God, and may be sayd as the spirituall circumcision (which was signified and shadowed by the corporall) to be *made without hands*.

Now as the Scripture speakes both of spiritualls and eternalls which are made without hands, so this text speakes of externalis and providentialis in the same language, *The mighty shall be taken away without hand*, that is, without any creature-helpe or visible humane hand; what ever is done without a visible hand, is done by the hand of God. *Elihu* intimates a punishment upon the

Indicatur divinum supplicium, cuius nulla humana causa assignari, aut quod nulla humana vi declinari potest.

mighty, which (as to the effecting of it) cannot be assigned to any thing in man, much lesse can the effecting of it, be hindred by man. The hand of God is most visible, in doing that which no visible hand hath done, or can undoe. *They shall be taken away without hand.*

Hence note.

The mightiest have no might against God.

That cannot be avoyded by any humane power, which is done without humane power. God slew the first-borne of *Egypt*, and destroyed the *Assyrian* hoast without hand, he did it by his Angel, no hand appearing against them. The Lord smote *Herod*, and he died without hand (*Acts 12. 23.*) *Immediately* (that is, presently, as the Greeke word imports, 'tis true also, immediately, that is, without humane meanes, as our *English* word also imports) *the Angel of the Lord smote him, and he was eaten of wormes, and gave up the Ghost.* What a poore worme was that mighty man in the hand of God, when God slew him without hand, and commanded the wormes to eate him? *Jesus Christ*, who is also the *mighty God* (*Isa: 9. 6.*) called himselfe *a worme and no man*, in his humiliations for the redemption of lost man (*Psal: 22. 6.*) What are the mightiest men but wormes to God, who is so mighty, that if he say the word, wormes become their Masters. The mighty Giants are before God but pigmy's, punyes, or children. The Prophet gives a good warning (*Jer: 9. 23.*) *Let not the mighty man glory in his might.* Let him not glory in the might of his arme, Let him not glory in the might of his armes or Armies, though man have an Army of mighty men about him, yet let him not glory in them, no nor in the might of his power or authority. If any man useth his might against God, what is his might unto God? (*Psal: 58. 1.*) *Why boastest thou O mighty man, that thou canst doe mischief?* If a man be mighty, and have a mind to doe mischief with his might, especially if he boasteth in his might, because he can doe mischief with it, he is not only sinfull, but weake and foolish. There is no greater morall weaknes then to boast either of naturall, martiall, or civill strength. Could any of the mighty men of this world stand before the might of God, they had somewhat to boast of. Read the word of the Lord against the mighty (*Isa: 2. 10.*) Behold the Kings and Captaines of the earth.

earth trembling before the presence of the Lambe (*Rev. 6. 15.*) and then judge how weake the strongest are before the Lord ? All ages are full of teaching examples, that there is no might to his who is Almighty.

Secondly, Note.

What ever God will doe he can easily doe it.

He can effect it with a looke, with a cast of his eye, he can doe it with a breath of his mouth, he can doe it with a word. It is said (*Exod. 14. 24.*) *God looked unto the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and through the cloud, and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and tooke off their Chariot wheelles, that they drave them heavily.* To looke upon them was an easie thing, God did not give them a stroake with his hand, but only a looke with his eye, and that overthrew them.

Thirdly, Note.

God can do the greatest things alone.

He can subdue the mighty, though none come forth to his help against the mighty ; they are cursed who do not help the Lord against the mighty, when they set their might against the Lord ; (*Judg. 5. 23.*) *Curse ye Meroz, (saith the angel of the Lord,) curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof, because they came not forth to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* But though it be the sin of man not to help the Lord against the mighty, yet the withdrawing of their help doth not hinder the Lord in his purpose against the mighty : For, *He taketh away the mighty without hands.* Though men stir not, though angels should not stir to his help, yet his own arm can bring either salvation or destruction. It is said of the Lord (*Isa. 44. 24.*) *He stretched out the heavens alone ;* there was none to help him to unfold that vast canopy of heaven, he stretcht out the heavens alone. As in the Creation *he made all alone,* so in Providence he can act and effect all alone. *It is a great glory to God, that he hath many instruments to help him, many tongues to speak for him, many hands to work for him ; but it is a greater glory to God that he needs none to help him, none to speak or work for him.* In this the glory of the Lord infinitely outshines the glory of, all the mighty Kings and Princes of the earth. They have done, and can do mighty things, but not with-

without hands, and therefore they have the hands of thousands at command for them; 'tis not their place to put their hand to the work, 'tis enough that they give commands and orders, 'tis the duty of others to execute all their righteous commands, and fulfil their orders. But the Lord hath not only a commanding power, but an executing power too in himself; though no hand move, yet his affairs stand not still. God, and all creatures put together, are no more then God alone without any creature: Many are useful, but none are necessary unto God. Take two inferences from it.

First, This is matter of terror to wicked men; though they see no hand in the world against them, much less any able to match them, least of all to check them, yea though they see all hands for them, yet this is no security to them, this is no assurance of one hour's safety, seeing the Lord taketh away the mighty without hand, and he usually doth it when they see not which way any hand can reach them. It is the conclusion of one of the Ancients upon this place in reference to a mighty oppressour; *He is invisibly pull'd down, who did visibly pull down; He ruined others with hands, but himself shall be ruin'd without hand; he saw him whom he took away, but he shall not see him who takes him away.* Let them who live without fear of any hand, remember the Apostles admonition, (*Heb. 10. 31.*) *It is a fearful thing to fall into the hand of the living God, who takes away the mighty without hand.*

*Invisibiliter
rapitur, qui vi-
sibiliter rapie-
bat, Gregor.*

Secondly, This is matter of wonderful comfort, to all that fear God, and trust upon him, whether Princes or people, whether mighty men or mean men. What though ye see no hand for you; yet 'tis enough if he be for you who saves you without hand. The protecting and saving power of God, is as great and as effectual as his destroying power is; yea, he oftner saves without hand, then he destroyes without hand. As the Kings of the earth, so the great King of heaven and earth, loves to deal his favours, and bestow his rewards immediately with his own hand, but usually afflicts and punisheth by the hands of others. That's a most pregnant Scripture to this purpose, (*Hos. 1. 7.*) where the Lord promiseth to save Judah; But Judah might say, I am in a very low condition, and no help appears: Therefore he addeth, *I will save them by the Lord their God; and will not save them by Bowe, nor by Sword, nor by Battel, nor by Horses, nor Horsemen.* Judah shall be

be saved, though there be no hand to save them. *I will save them* (saith the Lord) *by the Lord their God.* I will do it immediately. And the Lord doth not only say (in the affirmative) he will save them without hand ; but he saith also (in the Negative) that he will not save them with hands, *But I will not save them by Bowe, nor Sword, nor Battel, nor Horses, nor Horsemen ;* there shall be no appearance of these helps, I have heretofore destroyed you by Sword, and Bowe, by Horses, and Horsemen, but I will have all the honour and thanks of your salvation to my self. Though the Lords people have neither horses nor horsemen, though they are as helples as is imaginable, yet the Lord is able to save them, & he wil do it in the fittest season. As this is true in reference to Princes and Nations in their publique capacity, so private Christians may take up the comfort of it. What though great distress and affliction be nigh, and no hand to save you, yet the Lord can save without hand ; if you are low, he can raise you, though none lend a hand to raise you ; if poor, he can enrich you ; if weak, he can strengthen you, though you have no means for either : It is an everlasting spring of comfort, that the Lord can do all things without hand, that he needs not be beholding to the creature, nor stands in need of their help to effect either threatned judgments against Babylon, or his promised mercies unto Sion:

Thus we have seen *Elihu* describing the righteous, though severe-dealings of God, both with people and Princes, who despise his counsels, and provoke his wrath : The reason why they fall under his wrath, is further discovered in the next words.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 21, 22.

For his eyes are upon the wayes of man, and he seeth all his goings.

There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

IN the former verse *Elihu* reported the judgement of God both upon the people and upon the Princes of the earth, *In a moment shall they die, &c.* In these two verses, he gives us a proof that the Lord is righteous in judgement both upon Princes and people, or he assigns the ground of it. That the words are a reason of the former, the Causal Particle in the beginning of the 21th verse puts it out of question.

Vers. 21. *For his eyes are upon the wayes of men.*

As if he had said, God doth not these things, he troubles nor Nations, and Nobles, People, or Princes, by an absolute and soveraigne power, or because he will, but he finds just cause to do it; *What men do, is enough to justifie God in what they suffer*: He hath alwayes power enough in his hand to destroy all men, and to turn this world back into its first nothing, but he never useth his power, nor puts it forth without cause.

For his eyes are upon the wayes of man, &c.

God is a Spirit, the simplicity of his Essence is his first and highest perfection, he is purely incorporeal; yet as the passions of man's minde, so the members of his body are often in Scripture attributed unto God; we read of the *face of God*, of the *hand of God*, of the *ear of God*, and as in many other places, so in this, of the *eyes of God*: Now as the ear of God notes only his power of hearing, and the hand of God his power of working, so the eye or eyes of God note only his power of seeing, knowing and discerning the wayes of men. And when *Elihu* saith, *his eyes are upon the wayes of man*, his meaning is only this, he clearly discerns and understands the wayes of man.

These words, *his eyes are upon the wayes of man*, intimate,
First,

First, A present act, he doth not say, they were, or they will be upon the wayes of man, but *they are*. Secondly, They imply as a present, so a continued act; his eyes are so upon the wayes of man, that they are never off them. The eyes of God dwell, as it were, upon the wayes of man: His eyes are said indeed *to run to and fro through the whole earth*, (2 Chron. 16.8.) yet they do not wander from one object to another, but are fixed and settled upon every one. Thirdly, they imply an intensive act, or the seriousness of the heart of God upon the wayes of man. We may behold a thing, and yet take no great notice of it; but when our eyes are said to be upon any thing, this imports they are busied much upon it. Fourthly, This manner of speaking signifieth not only a clear sight, but that which is operative, carrying with it a most exact scrutiny or disquisition of the wayes of men, according to that expression of the Psalmist, (Psal. 11.4.) *His eyes behold, his eye-lids try the children of men*. God doth not only behold, but his eye-lids try the wayes of men; that is, he so looks upon them, that he looks through them, and discerneth what they are to the utmost. God doth not only behold the body and bulk of our actions, but the soul and spirit of them, and while he seeth them, he seeth into them. All this, and much more then we can apprehend, is comprehended in those words, *His eyes are upon*

The wayes of man.

The word is plural, not *way*, but *wayes*; which shews the extensiveness of the sight or knowledge of God: The word being put indefinitely, is to be taken universally: His eyes are not confined to this or that object, to this or that place, to this or that person, but his eyes look over all, *His eyes are upon the wayes of man*.

Yet further, *the wayes of man* may be distinguished; First, As they are either internal or external. The internal wayes of man, are the wayes of his heart, as the Prophet hath it, (Isa. 57. 17.) *He went on frowardly in the way of his heart*. And these wayes of the heart, our inward wayes are, first, our thoughts, what we imagine and conceive; secondly, our affections, what we love, and what we hate, what we rejoyce in, and what we mourn for, declare the way of our hearts. Thirdly, The wayes of the heart are a man's purposes, resolutions, and intentions what to do. Fourthly,

The wayes of the heart are man's designs, or his aims, what he drives at, or proposeth as his end in all that he doth. In this latitude we are to understand the present Text; when *Elisha* saith, *the eyes of God are upon the wayes of man*, remember they are upon his thoughts, upon his affections, upon his purposes, upon his designs and aims, all these are before the Lord; as it is said of Christ, (*John* 2. 25.) *He needed not that any should testifie of man; for he knew what was in man*; that is, both the state of his heart, and all the movings of it. And if the Lord's eyes be upon the internal wayes of man, then certainly they are upon the external wayes of man; if he knoweth what work the heart is at or about, certainly he knoweth what the hand is at or about. He that knoweth which way the minde goeth, cannot but know which way the foot goeth. His eyes are upon the external wayes of man, but 'tis his chief glory that his eyes are upon the internal wayes of man, (*Gen.* 6. 5.) *The Lord saw that the wickedness of man was great upon the earth*: He saw man's actions or outward wayes were very wicked, but besides that, saith the Text, *He saw, that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually*. He saw the wayes within, what was formed up, or (as the word there notes) what creatures were made and fashioned in the minde of man. Thus, if we take the wayes in that distinction of internal and external, the eyes of God are upon them.

Secondly, Take the wayes of man as differenced in their kinds, as they are either good or evil; the eyes of the Lord are upon both. *They are* (saith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 15. 3.) *in every place, beholding the evil and the good*: that is, the evil wayes and the good wayes of men. But saith not the Prophet (*Habbak.* 1. 14.) *Thou art of purer eyes then to behold evil*? Which may seem, at first reading, to imply, that God doth not behold the evil wayes or actions of men. I answer, if we distinguish the word *behold*, we shall soon reconcile these Scriptures. To *behold*, is either to discern what is before us, or to *behold*, is to approve what is before us. There is a seeing of knowledge, and there is a seeing of contentment; now when the Prophet saith, *the Lord is of purer eyes then to behold evil*, his meaning is, he doth not, he cannot behold evil with contentment or approbation, otherwise the Lord beholds evil, even all the evil in the world; *both good and evil are before him, who is himself only and altogether good. His eyes are upon the ways of*

Man.

Man.

וְאִם

Not only upon the wayes of this or that man, but of every man; let man be what he will for a man, let him be a great man, or a mean man, let him be a rich man or a poor man, let him be a wise man or a fool, let him be an ignorant or a knowing man, let him be a holy or a prophane man, let him be a subtle or a simple man, his eyes are upon him. Those things which difference men among themselves, make no difference at all among them, as to the eye of God. *His eyes are upon the wayes of* (whomsoever you can call) *man.*

And he seeth all his goings.

This latter clause of the verse is of the same sence with the former, therefore I shall not stay upon the opening of it. The Scripture often useth Synonyma's, and repeats the same thing in other terms, to shew the truth and certainty of it; and surely the Spirit gives a double stroke here, to strike this truth home into our hearts, and fasten it in our mindes, *He beholdeth the wayes, and he seeth all the goings of man.* The word translated *seeing*, signifieth a very curious or critical sight, as was opened before.

וְאִם

Again, these latter words say, *he seeth*

All his goings.

Where we have the universal particle exprest, which was only understood in the forme. And though these two words, *wayes* and *goings* may be expounded for the same thing, yet in this conjunction we may distinguish them, by understanding the word *wayes*, for the constant course of a man's life, and the word *goings*, for his particular and renewed motions in those wayes. The Original word rendred *goings*, signifies sometimes *going with much caution*, yea with a kinde of state or pomp, yet frequently any ordinary going.

וְאִם
incedere
cum pompa,
proprie deambulare.

Now, when *Elihu* asserts, *The Lord seeth all his goings*; we may sum up the matter under these five considerations; He seeth First, Where he goeth, what his path is. Secondly, He seeth whether he is going, what he makes the end of his journey or travel. Thirdly, when he goeth, or sets out, what time he takes for every undertaking. Fourthly, how far he goeth, the Lord takes notice of every step, what progress he makes in any business

good or bad. Fifthly, he seeth in what manner he goeth, with what heart, with what mind, or frame of soule he goeth. Thus distinct and exact is the Lord in *beholding the wayes, and in seeing all the goings of man.*

Hence note, First.

Surely the Lord is a God of knowledge.

If we could conceive a man to have his eyes in all places, and upon all persons, an eye upon all hearts, and an eye in all hearts, as wel as an eye upon all hands, you would say this man must needs be a knowing man, especially if he have such an eye, as the eye of God is, a discerning eye, a distinguishing eye, a trying eye, an eye which seeth to the bottome of whatsoever it seeth. *Hannah* sayd this in her song (*1 Sam. 2. 3.*) *Speak not so proudly, let not arrogancy come out of your lips; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.* 'Tis not a slight superficial knowledge which God hath of things or persons, *by him actions are weighed*, and so are the Actors. God puts all into an even ballance, and he will weigh both persons and actions to a graine, yea every word and thought shall goe into the ballance. It was said to that great Monarch *Belteshazer*, by a hand-writing upon the wall, *Thou art weighed in the ballances.* The Lord weighed that great King, he weighed all his power, and the exercise of it; and he that weigheth Kings, will not leave the meanest subject unweighed; *by him actions are weighed.* We many times passe over our actions without consideration, and never take the weight of them, at least, we never weigh them in the Sanctuary ballance. If they will beare weight in the ballance of the world, we presume they will in Gods ballance also. But as the Lord is a God of knowledge etherwise then man is, so by him actions are weighed otherwise then by man. It is said of Idolls (*Psal: 115. 15.*) *They have eyes and see not;* but we may say of the Lord *Jehovah* the true God, the living God, he hath properly, no eyes, yet he seeth; and his faculty of seeing is infinitely above that which himselfe hath planted in man. The Atheist while he is about the worst work in the world, the breaking in pieces of the people of God, and afflicting his heritage, while he is slaying the widow, and the stranger, and murdering the fatherlesse, while he is (I say) at such kind of worke as this, he saith (*Psal: 94. 7.*) *The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God*

of Jacob regard it. But what ſaith the Pſalmiſt to him and ſuch as he (*v. 8, 9.*) *Underſtand ye brutiſh among the people, he that ſermed the eye, ſhall not he ſee?* Thoſe words of the Prophet to King Aſa (*2 Chron: 16. 9.*) *The eyes of the Lord run too and fro through the whole earth,* are an alluſion to a man who having a deſire to know much, or to ſee all in the world, runs up and down, travels from place to place, from Country to Country for information. The Lord would have us know that he knoweth every thing as exactly, as they who run from place to place to ſee what's done in every place. It is prophecyed of the latter times (*Dan: 12. 4.*) *Many ſhall run too and fro, and knowledge ſhall be increaſed;* that is, many ſhall be ſo graciouſly greedy of knowledge, that they will reſuſe no labour nor travel to attaine it. *They will run too and fro,* to inquire and ſearch for it, they will not thinke any time or labour loſt, if they may but gaine that precious commodity by it, called true knowledge, or the knowledge of the truth. And that expreſſion of *running too and fro,* may wel be expounded, they ſhall by diſcourſe and arguing beate out the truth; In diſcourſing the mind runs too and fro faſter then the feete can in travelling; In diſcourſe we run from poynt to poynt, from reaſon to reaſon, from objection to objection, from queſtion to queſtion, till we come to ſolid answers and concluſions, and ſo knowledge is increaſed. The Lord is ſurely a God of knowledge, whoſe *eyes run too and fro* without motion, and ſee the bottome of all things, without diſcourſe or argumentation.

Secondly, Note.

The Lords knowledge of man never abateth, he is alwayes obſerving and alike obſerving what men doe and what men are.

The beſt the moſt waking men, have their ſlumbings and ſleepings; but the Lord neither ſlumbreth nor ſleepeth, *his eyes are upon the wayes of man.* And when the Scripture ſaith, *The Lord doth neither ſlumber nor ſleepe,* we may underſtand it in a twofold reference. Firſt, as to the protection of his people (*Pſal: 121. 4.*) *Behold he that keepeth Iſrael; ſhall neither ſlumber nor ſleep;* that is, he watcheth over them ſo unceſſantly, ſo unweariably, that no danger can approach them without his knowledge. Secondly, he never ſlumbereth nor ſleepeth as to the obſervation and conſideration of all people, he never takes his eye off from the wayes of man.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Note

The Lords knowledge or sight of mans wayes, is universall and everlasting.

The All-seeing God seeth all our wayes, and he seeth them all wayes. And he seeth them all alwayes by one act. The Lords view or prospect of things is not successive one after another, but conjunctive, all at once. The Lord hath a large eye, and an everlasting eye, yea is all eye. He knows all things; First, past or that have been; Secondly, present or that are; Thirdly, future, possible or that shall be. Thus saith the Lord in the Prophet (*Isa: 46. 10.*) *I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.* And upon this read the Lords challenge of all the Idolls in the world (*Isa: 41. 21, 22, 23.*) *Let them shew the former things what they be, that we may consider them and know the latter end of them, or declare us things to come; Shew the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.* As if the Lord had sayd, if ye can tell us all that's past, or any thing that is to come, as I can, then ye may take the honour of God, otherwise ye are but lyes and vanities. Again the Lord knows all things; First, without distraction; and secondly, he knows all things with clearest distinction; it is no more trouble to the Lord to see all things then to see one, and he seeth all things as if he had but one thing to see.

From the consideration of this knowledge of God, let me give foure or five inferences for instruction.

First, (which is most naturall to the text) if, *the Lords eyes be upon the wayes of man, if he seeth all his goings, then all the Lords Judgements are right.*

The Judges of this world, may have a principle of righteoussesse in them, and we may call them just and righteous Judges, yet all their Judgements are not alwayes right. For, as some men are so ignorant, that they know nothing at all, so there are none so knowing as to know all things; the clearest sighted Judges doe not see all that may concerne them in giving Judgement; even among them some may be blinde, and many blinded, some are blinde and cannot see much, others are blinded and will not see all

all that they see, they are blinded possibly with bribes and gifts, with hopes or fears, with passions and prejudices. And how cleare-sighted and honest-hearted soever any are, yet they cannot see all, somewhat may lye out of their sight. Hence it cometh to passe, that a just Judge may doe that which is unjust, he cannot see quite through every matter, though he set himselfe to search the matter before he giveth Judgement. But as the Lord is all righteousness in his principle, and beares an everlasting love to righteousness; so he hath a cleare sight of all things and persons, and therefore he must needs give a righteous Judgement concerning all things, actions, and persons; Though he overthrow nations he is righteous, though he overthrow Princes he is righteous, because he seeth into all things, and proceedeth upon certain knowledge of every mans case and condition. He cannot erre in Judgement, who hath no error in his Judgement, nor any deviation in his will.

Secondly, *If the Lords eyes are upon all the wayes of men, then, certainly sinners, whose wayes are evill, shall never goe unpunished.*

For if he have a principle of righteousness in him, and an eye to see all their unrighteous wayes, they cannot escape his justice; Say to the wicked, *woe to him, for he shall eat the fruit of his doings* (Isa: 3. 11.) The righteous God knoweth the unrighteousness of man, and therefore woe to the unrighteous man.

Thirdly, Take this conclusion, *Then no godly man, no good man, shall goe unrewarded, or loose the reward of that good which he hath done.*

The Lord is righteous, and he seeth every one that doth right; or the righteousness of every mans way; and it is his promise to reward the righteous, therefore they shall be rewarded. This is matter of strong consolation, and great encouragement to all that are righteous; If the Lord seeth all they doe, nothing which they have well done shall be lost in the dark, or lie in the dust. *God will bring forth their righteousness as the light, and their just dealing as the noone day.* And as the knowledge which God hath of their wayes, assureth the righteous that they shall be rewarded for, so that they shall be assisted and protected in their doing
righte-

righteousnesse. The Prophet makes that inference in the place before-cited (*2 Chron: 16. 9.*) *The eyes of the Lord run too and fro through the earth (what followeth ?) to shew himselfe strong in the behulfe of them,* or (as we put in the Margin) *strongly to hold with them whose heart is perfect towards him.* The Lord is alwayes strong, and alike in strength, his hand is not shortned at any time, that he cannot save, yet he doth not alwayes shew his strength; but as he is strong, so he will shew himselfe strong for the perfect or upright in heart; that is, he will act his strength to the utmost for the safety and assistance of those whose hearts are perfect with him. So then, as they that are good, and doe good, shall be rewarded for the good they have done, so they shall be protected in the dangers and evils they incurre while they are doing good. Another Prophet speakes both these inferences from this principle of the knowledge or sight of God (*Jer: 32. 19.*) *He is great in counsell, and he is mighty in working, for his eyes are upon all the wayes of the sons of men, to give to every one according to his wayes, and according to the fruit of his doings.*

Fourthly, If the eyes of the Lord are upon all the wayes of the Children of men, *then the Lord will call all men to an account for their wayes.*

Why doth he take notice of their wayes, but to bring them to a reckoning? That's the Apostles conclusion (*Rom: 14. 12.*) *So then every one of us shall give an account of himselfe to God;* God would not take an account of our wayes while we live, if he did not intend to bring us to an account when we dye. As the omniscience of God fits him to call every man to an account, so it is an evidence that he will. Why should our wayes and workes be strictly observed and recorded, if they were not to be judged?

Fifthly, This truth that the eyes of God are upon all the wayes of man, should awaken every man to take heed (as *David* resolved he would, *Psal: 39. 1.*) to his wayes. Did we walke as remembering we are under his All-seeing eye, O how circumspectly should we walke! doth the Lord inspect our wayes, O how should we inspect our owne wayes! It argueth a great deale of Atheisme in the heart, if not the grossest Atheisme, yet Atheisme (*quo-ad hoc*) as to this or that thing: while that which some are afraid to doe, if a man, yea if a child see them, they are not afraid to doe though

though they heare that God seeth them. To feare to doe a thing when the eye of a creature is upon us, and yet to doe it notwithstanding God seeth us, what is this but either an unbelieve that the eye of God seeth us, or a contempt of his All seeing eye? This Divine Attribute, the All-seeing eye of God, wel wrought upon the heart by faith, is enough to over-aw the sinfullnesse of our hearts. And though the people of God have a higher principle, upon which they forbear the doing of evill, then this, because God will see it, and punish it, yet to keep the heart in a holy feare of doing evill upon that principle, is both needfull and our duty. The Apostle would not have servants doe their Masters commands *with eye-service as men-pleasers*. It is indeed a baseness in a servant to doe his duty meerely because his Masters eye is upon him, or to forbear to doe what is against or beside his duty, because his Master seeth him; but how great is the impudence and wickedness of that servaut who will not keep to his duty, when his Masters eye is upon him! So, in this case, meerely to forbear doing evill, because we heare God sees us, is eye-service, but how great is their wickedness, who will not forbear to doe evill, though they heare and know that God seeth it? Which *Elihu* confirms yet further in the next words.

Vers. 22. *There is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.*

This verse holds out that truth negatively, which the former held out affirmatively. There Gods knowledge of mans wayes, was asserted, here his ignorance or nescience of the wayes of man is denied.

There is no darkness, &c.

The words seeme to be the prevention of an objection. For some possibly might say, 'Tis true indeed, God hath a large knowledge, his eye seeth farre, but we hope we may sometime be under covert, or compassed about with such darkness, that the Lord cannot see us. Therefore (saith *Elihu*) *there is no darkness nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.* The Prophet gives a parallel prooffe and testimony of this knowledge of God both in the affirmative and negative part of it.

(*Jer. 16. 17.*) where he first asserts that God seeth all, *mine eyes are upon all their wayes*, and then denyeth, that any thing is a secret unto him, *They are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes.* These latter words of the Prophet are of the same signification with these of *Elihu*,

There is no darknes, &c.

We may take darknes two wayes ; First, for naturall darknes, that darknes which spreads it selfe over the face of the earth upon the going downe of the Sun, 'tis the privation of Light. Secondly, there is artificiall darknes, that darknes which men make to hide themselves, and their actions in, from the eye of God or man ; many are very skillfull, yea and successefull in making shadowes to hide their actions from men : They cover the evill which they have done with such cunning excuses or flat denyalls, and they cover what they purpose to doe (how foule soever) under such faire trappings of words, and specious pretenses, they glosse their worst actions and intentions with such appearances of good, that the wisest and best sighted men cannot finde them out. When *Absalon* had a most unnaturall as well as a most disloyall purpose to rayse a rebellion against his king-father, he coloured it with a devout profession of performing a vow ; This was artificiall darknes. 'Tis reported by the naturall Historian, of a little fish, which seeing its enemy neare, casts out a kinde of blacknes from it selfe, which darkens the water, and so escapes the danger. Thus men indeed hide themselves from man, and they would hide themselves from God too ; but *there is no darknes*, neither naturall nor artificiall, that can cover their wayes from his eye ; No,

Nor shadow of death.

The importance of this expression hath been opened more then once in this book, (*chap. 3. 5. chap. 10. 21. chap. 12. 22. chap. 28. 3.*) therefore I shall not stay upon it here ; only consider, when he saith, *There is no darknes nor shadow of death*, by *shadow of death*, he means extreamest darknes. If there be any darknes (as *Job* speaks *chap. 10. 22.*) like darknes it self, and whose light is as darknes, that is it. The metaphor is taken from the grave, where the dead being buried, have not the least glympse, ray, or shine

shine of light coming in to them, death wraps us up in extreamest darkness. And we finde in Scripture, *the shadow of death* put first, to express the extreamest of spiritual darkness, or the darkest spiritual state, (*Isa. 9. 2.*) *The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light, they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined:* that is, they that were wrapped up in the ignorance & utter unbelief of God in Christ, to these is Christ, the true light of God, the Sun of righteousness preached and openly revealed, and they pressed to the receiving of him, that their souls may live further as the shadow of death is put for the worst of spiritual evils, or to note man's natural state before conversion, so likewise; it is used in Scripture to note the worst of his spiritual evils, who (being converted) is in a spiritual state; He that is in a spiritual state, may be under great spiritual evils, great soul afflictions and troubles may fall upon him; which I conceive *David* intended while he shewed such high confidence, (*Psal. 23. 4.*) *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear none evil:* as if he had said, Though I were in the worst of soul-afflictions, having no light of the favour of God shining upon me, nor any comfort in my spirit, though (as *Heman* bemoans his deserted condition (*Psal. 88. 3.*) *My soul is full of troubles, and my life draweth nigh unto the grave, though I am laid in the lowest pit, in darkness, in the deep, yet I will fear no evil, for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staffe they comfort me.* Again, the shadow of death is often put in Scripture for the worst of outward worldly evils, (*Jer. 13. 16.*) *Give glory to the Lord your God before he cause darkness, &c. and while ye look for light, he turn it into the shadow of death;* that is, while ye expect good times and things, ye fall into the worst, or the worst befall you. Now as these words; *the shadow of death*, signifie the worst of, both in spirituals and temporals; so here they signifie the closest concealment of moral evils; some sinners think themselves as much out of sight as a buried carcass, and they veil their wickedness with such darkness as is like the very shadow of death. Sin is it self a shadow of death, yea death it self, and they who are dead in sins and trespasses, will do their best that their sins may be no more seen then the dead are. But *there is no darkness nor shadow of death*

where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.

What it is to be a *worker of iniquity*, was opened at the 8th verse of this chapter, and thither I refer the reader. Only in general know, *Workers of iniquity* are more then ordinary sinners, they are cunning at the committing, and cunning at the hiding of sin. Some are but bunglers at sin, they cannot sin with such an hellish skill as others do, and when they have sinned, they have not the art of hiding it; but others are (as we say) their crafts-masters both wayes, and they are properly called *workers of iniquity*. Yet (saith *Elihu*) the very *workers of iniquity*, they that make it their profession, their study, and their business to do evil, and to hide the evil they have done, to work mischief in the dark, and to keep their works in the dark, even they cannot be hid in any darkness. And when the Text saith, there is no darkness, &c. wherein the workers of iniquity may hide themselves; the meaning of it is, they stand naked, and in the open light before the eyes of God.

For though *Elihu* doth not say from what they cannot *hide themselves*, yet we may take it two wayes; they cannot hide themselves, first, from the sight of God; he will discern them. The Prophet saith of God (*Isa. 45. 15.*) *Thou art a God that hidest thy self*, (it is the word of the Text in another construction) that is, as I conceive, it may be expounded, *Thou art an invisible God*. God hides himself naturally, or in his own nature, for that is invisible: likewise God sometimes hideth himself voluntarily, as sometimes he manifesteth or sheweth himself voluntarily; but he is a God alwayes hid as to his nature, because he is invisible; and so he is called a *God that hideth himself*, in opposition to Idols or false gods, who are obvious to the eyes of men; Idols have eyes and see not, but themselves are seen by every eye. Jehovah the true God seeth, but hath no eye, neither can any eye see him; Thus he is a God hiding himself in the spirituality of his own being, which gross Idols cannot: the following words in that Text in the Prophet seem to make out this sence, (*vers. 16.*) *They shall be ashamed and confounded all of them*, (that is, all Idol-makers, and Idol-worshippers, shall be ashamed and confounded) *they shall go to confusion together, that are makers of Idols*. Now, as God hideth himself both these wayes, sometimes voluntarily, or in his will, he resolves to hide himself from his people, as *David* complain'd,

plain'd, (*Psal. 13. 1.*) *How long wilt thou hide thy face from me?*) alwayes in the spirituality of his own nature ; so sinful men would be hidden too : though they cannot be hidden as to their nature, that being corporeal, yet they would hide themselves in their will, their wits are bent upon it, to make covers and shaddows for themselves, that they may keep out of the sight of God, or that they may not be seen of him, who cannot be seen, but is, in that sence, *a God that hideth himself.*

And as men cannot hide themselves from the sight of God, so nor, secondly, from the revenging power of God : This followeth the former ; for he that would keep out of the sight of another, doth it usually that he may be hid from that danger and evil which he fears that other might bring upon him. Thus it is with the sinner, he hath his hiding places, he would withdraw himself from the revenging power of God, like a malefactor, who is unwilling to appear and come to the Bar before his Judge, but all in vain.

Meer natural or unregenerate men are much hidden from themselves ; that is, they see little what themselves are, they know not their own condition, nor upon what terms they stand ; even a godly man is much hidden from himself, *his life is hid with Christ in God,* (*Col. 3. 3.*) his life is not only hidden from the world, but in a great measure from himself : the excellency of his spiritual state surpasseth his present sight : but a wicked man is much more hid from himself, he doth not see the wickedness of his own heart, nor the danger, the desperate danger he is in, he seeth not that he is within a step of the pit, or that there is, as it were, but a wainscot between him and hell fire ; he seeth none of these things. Thus a wicked man is hidden from himself, and 'tis his work to prepare darkness and shaddows of death to cover his dead works from God. But there is *no darkness* will serve his purpose, nor *shaddow of death wherein he may hide himself.*

Hence Note.

First, *It is usual for, and natural to sinners, to seek hiding places.*

When *Elihu* saith, *There is no darkness,* &c. he plainly intimates, that it is the designe and business of sinners, to make darkness to hide themselves ; it is as much their business to hide themselves when they have done evil, as it is their business to do evil.

While

while the workers of iniquity confeſs in general the eyes of God behold their ways (they deny not in word that God is All-ſeeing) yet, as they often blear the eye of man, ſo they are not out of hope to put darkneſs and raiſe a miſt between themſelves and the eye of God ; Or if they riſe not to this vain thought, that they can hide themſelves from God, yet they come to this, that God hideth himſelf (as not regarding what they do) from them. Hence *David* affirms of the wicked man, (*Pſal. 10. 11.*) *He hath ſaid in his heart, God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, he will never ſee it.* Many ſay in their hearts, God ſeeeth them not, while with their tongues they confeſs he is an all-ſeeing God. The heart hath a tongue in it as well as the head, and theſe two tongues ſeldome ſpeak the ſame language : While the head-tongue ſaith, we cannot hide our ſelves from the ſight of God, the heart-tongue of wicked men will ſay, God will hide himſelf from us, he will not ſee. But if their heart ſpeak not thus, then as the Prophet ſaith, (*Iſa. 29. 15.*) *They dig deep to hide their counſels from God ; ſurely they have a hope to hide their counſels, elſe they would not dig deep to hide them.* Their digging is not proper, but tropical ; as men dig deep to hide what they would not have ſeen in the earth ; ſo they by their wits, plots, and devices, do their beſt to hide their counſels from God, and *they ſay who ſeeeth, who knoweth ?* We, ſurely, are not ſeen either by God or man.

Now 'tis very natural for ſinners to endeavour the hiding of themſelves from God upon a two-fold account ; Firſt, To avoid ſhame ; All ſinners are not altogether deboiſt, all have not altogether baffled their own conſciences, they have a kinde of modeſty, they would not be ſeen ſinning ; it troubles them not to do evil, but a fear to be detected in doing it is their trouble. Secondly, Sinners hide themſelves for fear ; ſo *Adam* did, he was afraid as well as aſhamed, *I was afraid* (ſaid he) *becauſe I was naked, and I hid my ſelf,* (*Gen. 3. 10.*) The Prophet tells us of ſuch (*Iſa. 2. 21.*) *They ſhall go into the clefts of the rock, and into the tops of the ragged rocks, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his Maieſty, when he ſhall ariſe to ſhake terribly the earth.* We finde all ſorts call to the hills to hide them, for fear of him that ſate on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, (*Rev. 6. 15, 16.*)

Secondly, Obſerve.

How much ſoever ſinners attempt, yet they cannot hide themſelves from God.

Let

Let them study never so long, and dig never so deep, they cannot be hid : Where can a sinner be hid from him who is every where ? Or, what thing can be our covering from him, in whose sight all things are open ? Then let none think they have made a good market in sinning, when they have hid their sins from the eyes of men ; what will it avail to hide your selves from men, when you lie open and manifest to the eye of God ? read *Psal.* 139. 12. *Amos* 3. 2. The Apostle saith (*1 Tim.* 5. 24, 25.) *some mens sins are open before hand, going before to judgment ;* (that is, other men quickly see what they are, & can judge what they have done) *and some men, they follow after ;* though they were hidden at the first, yet they are afterward discovered unto men often, as alwayes unto God : As they are not hid from God now, so he will bring them forth at last, in the sight of men : that the Apostle adds in the next verse, *Likewise also the good works of some are manifest before hand, and they that are otherwise cannot be hid.* The word *otherwise* may have a two-fold reference ; First to the word manifest : As if he had said, though the good works of a man be not presently manifest, yet they cannot be long hid, they shall be opened and revealed. Secondly, The word *otherwise* may refer to good works, and so it reaches the point fully ; that is, those works which are not good, or otherwise then good, cannot be hid, though men labour much to hide them. Sinners, leave off your hiding, leave off your hiding, for you shall not be hid. There is no way for sinners to hide themselves from God ; they may hide themselves in God, in the love, in the favour and mercy of God. Thus sinners may hide themselves in God, but from God they cannot be hid. Christ is a hiding place unto his people, and he is so in a double respect ; First, from trouble, or in time of trouble ; thus David spake (*Psal.* 32. 7.) *Thou art my hiding place : The name of the Lord is a strong Tower* (saith Solomon, *Prov.* 18. 10.) *the righteous runneth into it* (for shelter in time of trouble) *and is safe.* The Prophet is express in this, (*Isa.* 32. 2.) *A man* (that is Christ) *shall be for a hiding place from the winde, & a covert from the Tempest.* Christ is truly so, as to the outward troubles and storms which men raise against his people in the things of this life ; he is so, especially as to those internal troubles and storms which Satan, or our owne unbelieving hearts raise against us about the things and concernments of the next life. *That man who is* also.

also God, who is God-man, is the hiding place of humbled sinners, against the assault of all evils, whether temporal or spiritual. Secondly, As Christ is a hiding place from those troubles which men bring us unto for righteousness sake; or which Satan and our own hearts bring us into by raising questions about our interest in the righteousness of Christ; So he is a hiding place for us against our own unrighteousness. Sinners or unrighteous persons cannot hide themselves from Christ. And as Christ is the best hiding place from bodily dangers, so he is the only hiding place from soul-danger: Any sinner may hide himself in Christ, as to the guilt of sin, whose eyes are opened to see and acknowledge his sin. Or more distinctly, sinners under a fourfold consideration may hide themselves in Christ; First, if humbled sinners. Secondly, if confessing sinners. Thirdly, if reforming sinners. Fourthly, believing sinners. Christ is a hiding place to all such sinners. And seeing no sinner can hide himself from the wrath of God by any means of his own devising or contriving: Let all sinners give over such vain contrivements, and learn that Gospel wisdom, to hide themselves in Christ from that wrath which is to come. When we labour to hide our selves any other way, we lose our labour, and do not hide our selves from God, but God from our selves; that is, we hide the favour and mercy of God from our selves.

*Cum videri nos
non credimus,
in sole clausos
oculos tene-
mus. Illum à
nos abscondi-
mus, non nos
illi. Greg. l. 25.
c. 6.*

Lastly Observe.

Men are not easily persuaded that they cannot hide themselves from the sight of God.

That hath much hold of us, which we are often warned to avoid. This is not the only place of the whole Scripture, no nor of this particular book where this truth is held forth. There are many and many Scriptures wherein this common truth is pressed upon us. And doth not this (if not strongly infer, yet) intimate at least that man doth not easily believe it? Yea, Is it not an argument that man is apt to nourish himself in those vain hopes, that he can hide himself from God, or that he shall be hid from God? I may cast the foolish presumptions of men about this thing into four sorts. First, Some hope to be hid in the croud, or that they shall not be taken notice of among so many. Secondly, The eyes of others are so darkned, that their sins are hid from themselves, yea they

they take their vices for vertues, their evil acts for good ; and because they see no evil in what they do, they are perswaded, or presume God doth not. Thirdly, Many are never so well pleased as when they are flattered, or when others not only hide the sinfulness of their wayes from them, but commend and extol them as vertuous and praise worthy. And because their evil ways appear good to some men, they cannot be convinced that there is any evil in them appearing to God. Lastly, As all impenitent sinners put their sins out of their own sight, so nothing pleaseth them more then this imagination, that they shall never come into the sight of God.

Surely the Lord would never urge this matter so often upon the children of men if it were not so. But let sinners consider what they will do, and what will become of them, seeing, as it is impossible that they should be hid, so it will be most intolerable for them to appear and stand before God in the day of judgement, (*Psal. 1. 5.*) All must come to judgment, and appear at the Bar, but it will be an inexpressible grief to appear, and not be approved, or to appear and then be condemned. Therefore be wise, and hide your selves where you may be hid ; do not attempt to hide your selves (which is the attempt of most sinners) where you cannot be hid : They who will needs hide themselves in that darkness and shaddow of death, here spoken of, shall be cast into utter darkness, and abide for ever in that infernal valley of the shaddow of death, in which there is no ease to be had, and from which there is no release to be got. Darkness and death will be the portion of those sinners in the next world, who have studied to shaddow their sins with any kinde of darkness in this.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 23, 24, 25.

For he will not lay upon man more then right, that he should enter into judgement with God.

He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.

Therefore he knoweth their workes, and he over-tureth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.

IN the 23^d verse, being the first of this context, *Elihu* further justifyeth the severest proceedings of God with man; He that layeth upon man no more then is right, may be justified in whatsoever he layeth upon him; But God layeth upon man no more then is right, Therefore &c. The Assumption is expresse in the text.

Vers. 23. *For he will not lay upon man more then is right.*

The text strictly rendred, is, *He will not lay upon man more.* Our translators supply the words, *then is right* to determine what that *more* is which God will not lay upon man.

The words have a two-fold sence.

First, Some interpreters render them as a direct deniall of any power seated in or liberty given unto man, to plead, capitulate, or to come in judgement with God; *Elihu* charging it upon *Job*, that he had not done well in taking or using such a liberty to complaine about his condition; addeth here (according to this

Quia non ultra
inquam poner
dem super vi-
rum. i. c. pote-
statem homini
minquam faciet,
ut de se ille que-
ri possit. Merc:
Neg; enim ul-
tra in hominis
poteestate est,
ut veniat cum
deo in iudicio,
fore the Omnipotent
; there is no appeale from God, nor will he admit

admit sinners by any artifices, or delays, to interrupt the progreſſe of his juſtice.

Secondly, The words (as we render them) carry both an aſſertion, that God is juſt, and a demonſtration of it; *For he will not lay upon man more then is right, that he ſhould enter into judgement with God*; that is, man hath no cauſe to enter into judgement with God, if God ſhould give him leave, and let him be at his liberty in that poynť; *for God will not lay upon man more then is right.*

There is another ſupply of a word which alſo beareth a good ſenſe, and ſuites wel with this expoſition; thus, *God will not lay upon man more then he can beare, (or hath ſtrength to beare) that he ſhould enter into judgement with him*; if we reade the text ſo, then that of the Apoſtle (1 Cor. 10. 13.) is a cleare expoſition of it, *There hath no temptation taken you, but ſuch as is common to man; but God is faithfull, who will not ſuffer you to be tempted, above that you are able, but will with the temptation alſo make a way to eſcape, that ye may be able to beare it.* A temptation or affliction common to man, is but ſuch as man may beare; God will not overburden his people, he knoweth what fleſh and blood, as alſo what Grace can beare. As a man would not lay ſuch a weight upon a childe, as would burthen a man, (we lay a childſ burthen upon a child, and a mans burthen upon a man) ſo the Lord meaſures and weighs out his judgements in proportion to every mans ſtrength, he will not lay upon him more then he is able to beare. That's a good ſenſe, and hath a cleare reaſon in it, why man ſhould not complaine of what God layeth upon him, it being only proportionate to his ſtrength.

But I ſhall rather proſecute the text according to the ſupply given in our tranſlation; which makes the reaſon why all ſuch complaints ſhould be ſorborne and ſilenced, to be this, becauſe the ſufferings of man are never proportion'd beyond his deſert.

He will not lay upon man more then right.

That is, more then he hath deſerved, or is equitable in his caſe; whatſoever is layd, or impoſed upon man beyond right; he hath cauſe to complaine of, and may traaverse the Judgement, or deſire another hearing, yea he may appeale to ſome higher Judge if there be any; But if what is awarded againſt him be right ac-

according to Law, and suitable to Justice, let the sentence be what it will (let him be able to beare it or no, much more if he be able also to beare it, as in this case it is) he hath no cause at all to desire a review of it. Thus it is. (saith *Elihu*) in all the dealings of God with man, *He will not lay upon man more then is right;*

that he should enter into judgement with God.

To enter (or goe) into judgement (as the word is) is either to begin or renew a sute; and to desire the hearing of the cause againe. God makes no faulty Judgements, why then should any cause determin'd by him come to a second hearing? there may be reason enough among men to heare a cause againe, but what God resolves, needs not be reviewed much lesse reversed. Here then *Elihu* meets with those frequent complaints of *Job*, under his afflictions, and likewise with those his severall motions, and earnest petitions, to have his cause heard afresh, as if God had prest him too sore, or, at least, had not done him right in suffering him to be so sorely prest by men. Thus *Elihu* seemes to say; *God never gave any man any just cause, to plead his cause over againe with him, nor hath he given thee (O Job) any cause to desire it of him.* 'Tis true, carnall men, yea and sometimes godly men, when (as *Job* here) they are greatly afflicted, are ready to thinke and say they are over-severely dealt with; But the reason of *Elihu* stands good and firme against all these thoughts and sayings. *For he will not lay upon man more then is right.*

Hence note.

God never wronged, nor will wrong any man.

There are two speciall cases, in which God never did, nor ever will wrong man; First, he will not wrong man by denying him that reward, which he hath freely promised, no man shall serve God for naught; he shall not say, God hath promised, but he hath not performed. The experience of his people seale to the truth of his promises, as well as their faith imbraceth it. That hope of man which is anchored in a promise of God, never miscarried nor made any man ashamed. Secondly, God will not wrong man, by laying upon him a greater punishment then he hath threatned. The Magistrate cannot be charged with laying more punishment upon an offender, then is right, if he punisheth him not more then

the Law alloweth. There may be a great deal of severity (I grant) in punishing up to the rigor of the Law; but there is no unrighteousness in it. The Mosaical law allowed of forty stripes; now if they had layd forty-one upon any offender, they had layd upon him more then was right; because they exceeded the Law; and to have layd full forty stripes, which was the utmost they could by Law, had been severe, therefore they usually abated one stripe at least; Hence the Apostle Paul saith (2 Cor: 11. 24.) *Of the Jewes five times received I forty stripes save one;* if they had given Paul forty stripes they had done no wrong as to the Law, though one had been too many for and a wrong to him, who had not broken their law. Seeing the Lord lays no more upon the worst of sinners, then the law alloweth, he doth not lay upon man more then right. Yea not only the chastisements which the Lord layeth upon his owne servants, but the greatest punishments which he layeth upon the worst of the wicked, in this world, are much lesse then might with Justice be inflicted. This was Ezra's humble acknowledgement before the Lord (Ezra 9. 13.) *And after all that is come upon us, for our evill deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us lesse then our iniquities deserve.* The punishment that was upon the people of Israel, was exceeding great, in so much that Daniel saith in his prayer (Chap: 9. 11; 12.) *Under the whole heavens, hath not been done, as hath been done upon Jerusalem, yet Ezra speaking of that very dispensation, saith, Thou hast punished us lesse, then our iniquities deserve. In this life the greatest of our punishments, are lesse then the least of our sins.* Every sin, or transgression of the Law, deserves eternall death; therefore in this life the greatest punishments that fall upon sinners, are lesse then their sins. As the least mercies which God bestoweth upon them, are greater then the greatest of their deservings. (That was Jacobs free confession (Gen: 32. 10.) *I am not worthy of the least of* (or *I am lesse then*) *all the mercies, and of all the truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant.*) So the greatest punishments that fall upon them in this life, are lesse then the least of their sins: And in the next life, where sinners shall have full measure, heaped up, pressed downe, running over, and that for ever, yet then they shall not have one graine more, either of weight or measure, then they have deserved. *The Lord layeth upon no man in this life so much, nor in that to come more then is right.*

Hence

Hence it followeth, Secondly.

Man hath no cause to complaine of God, or God hath not given any man any cause to complaine whatsoever his sufferings are.

Why should he complaine who hath but his right? As God hath not given any man a liberty to complaine, so he hath not given any man just occasion, or a true reason to complaine. If the burden of punishment be heavy upon any man, let him thanke his own sin, or selfe for it, he hath but his due from God. We are often cruel to and wrong our selves, God is usually mercifull, and never but just to us; yea how great soever any affliction is, 'tis a mercy that 'tis no greater; and God can quickly make it greater, how great soever it is, and still be just. *As he never doth more then he may, so he never doth so much as he can in punishing us.* The Lord hath more in the treasures of his wrath; then yet he hath powred upon the worst of sinners. Nor indeed can the most capacious vessels of wrath, hold all his wrath; 'tis, as himselfe is, infinite. *Cain sayd, My punishment is greater then I can beare* (Gen. 4. 13.) yet God could have made his punishment greater then it was. Therefore *Jeremy confessed* (Lam. 3. 22.) *It is of the Lords mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions faile not.* Whatsoever is lesse then utter consumption, hath some mixture of compassion in it, every punishment hath somewhat of compassion in it, except that of everlasting damnation. O then let all flesh feare and tremble to enter into Judgement with God, to complaine or take offence at any of his proceedings with them.

There are foure things considerable in God, which should stop all mens mouths, from daring to doe so.

First, He is most powerfull; there is no escaping out of his hands.

Secondly, He is most wise and seeth quite through all that man hath done with his hand; yea all that hath been contrived in his heart.

Thirdly, He is most just, and will not be taken off from doing less, neither can he be provoked to do more then is right to any man.

Fourthly, How should man fear to enter into judgement with God, seeing his judgments are past finding out; they are, as the Scripture

pture saith, *a great deep*, we are not able to fathome them; therefore wo unto those that complain of, or murmur against them: we should alwayes pray with *David*, (*Psal. 143. 2.*) *Lord, enter not into judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified*: and we should alwayes be afraid to enter into judgement with God, for he will not only justifie, but magnifie himself and his works in the sight of all men living. We should be so far from entring into judgement with God (which many do when they think they do it not) that we should continually beg him, not to enter into judgement with us; for we are not only unable to stand before him, but must certainly be broken before him; as it followeth,

Verf. 24. *He shall break in pieces mighty men without number, and set others in their stead.*

As *Job* had often complained of his own troubles, so he had sometimes of the prosperity of wicked men, or that God suffered them who were not worthy to live, yet to live in pomp, power, and pleasure. Thus he expostulated the matter, (*chap. 21. 7.*) *wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power?* &c. We may conceive *Elihu* removing that stumbling stone, and answering him in these words, while he telleth us what work the Lord often maketh in the world in those his lesser and particular dayes of judgement, among the mighty of the world. He not only striketh and woundeth, troubleth and vexeth them, but breaketh them, yea, *breaketh them in pieces*. The words are a comparison between the mighty, & a potters vessel, of whom *David* saith (*Psal. 2. 9.*) *Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces as a potters vessel*; and he can break them so small, that there shall not be found in the bursting of them (as the Prophet speaks, *Isa. 30. 14.*) *a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withal out of the pit*. Thus the Lord shall break in pieces; not the poor, and weak, and mean; but

Mighty men.

Or as some render, *He shall break in pieces many men*; the Hebrew word refers to both quantities, to great in bigness, and great in number; but because we have their innumerableness mentioned

*Υπερταβιν
subigere
mollire.*

*Hieronymus
interpretatur
multos.*

כח ad u.
tranque quan-
tatem refer-
tur, sed malo
fortes. Merc.

tioned distinctly in the next clause, it is best to render the word by greatness in power or might here. For least any should think God could break only a few mighty men, therefore it is said, he shall break in pieces mighty men, in all the notions of might, the mighty in corporal strength, the mighty in civil strength, power, or authority, yea martial mighty men, if they stand in his way, and hinder his work,

Without number.

לא חקקו pro
חקקו, ita
ut numerus eo-
rum investiga-
ri non possit,
Pisc.
Certo numero
contineri non
possunt, quos
propter peccata
Dei iustitia
centeret, Aquil.

All these God breaketh in pieces like a Potters vessel, as if they were but a swarm of flies, and sweeps them away in a moment: As if he had said, God will give innumerable examples of his infinite power and unbyass'd justice in destroying the wicked, he hath and will destroy so many of them, that no man knoweth how many he hath destroyed, or will destroy.

There is another reading of the words, Our Translators put it in the margin of our Bibles, *He shall break in pieces mighty men without searching out*, which may have a two-fold interpretation: First, He shall break them in pieces, and no man ought to search or enquire into his doings, or say unto him (as that mighty Monarch confessed, Dan. 4. 35.) *What dost thou?* And thus it answers what was said in the former verse, *They shall not enter into judgement with God.* Some have a priviledge at Sea to pass without searching, no man must enquire what they carry, or what their lading is; surely when the Lord breaketh mighty men, no man may search into his doings, or enquire into his actions, further then for his own instruction and admonition, that he may answer the purpose of God in them, and give him glory.

Secondly, He will break them in pieces *without searching*; that is, without any formal examination or usual wayes of Process, at least without any known to us. The Lord needs not to stand searching as men do, to finde out matters against the miglty, to frame articles, or to bring in his Bill of Attainder against them; God needeth not search to know, because he knoweth all things without searching, and therefore may justly break men in pieces without this kinde of searching; or, *He will break them in pieces without inquisition*; that is, without shewing cause why. God doth not alwayes publish the reasons of his proceedings, his judgements are often secrete, though never unjust. We render well, *He will break in pieces mighty men.*

Without

Dei cui omnia
nota sunt, non
opus habet, in
facta hominum
inquirere,
Drus.

Without number.

That is, how many soever they are, or though they are innumerable, yet he will break them in pieces as one man: Thus the word is used (*chap. 5. 9. chap. 9. 11.* In both which places the Reader may finde the extent and emphasis of this expression, *without number*, further explained) only consider, that these mighty men without number, may be taken two wayes.

First, Collectively, as combined by leagues, or as marshall'd by orders into an Host: as if he had said, though an Army of them be gathered together, even a numberles Army, yet the Lord can break them in pieces, (*Isa. 8. 9.*) *Associate your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces; gird your selves, and ye shall be broken in pieces.*

Secondly, We may take these mighty men singly or personally; Thus the Lord breaketh in pieces *mighty men without number*, one after another, one at this time, and another at that time; how many of them soever arise up one after another to oppose him, to oppress his people, or to do wickedly, they shall surely be broken. Mr Broughton renders to this sence, *He bruiseth mighty men without end*, he doth not break them without end, as having no end in breaking them, but as without end, notes his breaking them endlessly, or for ever. If men will sin without end, he can break them without end; he can renew destruction, as fast as they renew transgression.

Hence Observe, First,
God can easily ruine the mightiest men of the world.

He can break them in pieces, as an earthen vessel, with an iron rod, and how soon is that done? Both the holy Scriptures, and humane Histories abound with such examples. What a number of mighty men inhabited the old world? *There were Giants in the earth in those days,* (*Gen. 6. 4.*) yet God overthrew them all by a flood, they sank like lead in those mighty waters. What mighty men inhabited *Canaan*, before the children of *Israel* came to possess it? The searchers of the land brought in a report, that they were but as Grasshoppers to them, & they had Cities walled up to heaven, yet the Lord broke in pieces all those mighty men, *Sihon the King of the Amorites, and Og the King of Bashan*; and when *David* came to the Crown, he (in Gods strength) destroyed the rest of
S s s s them.

them. What mighty men were they that ſate upon the Throne of the four Monarchies? They had in their dayes the rule of the whole world, yet the Lord brake them in pieces. Firſt, the Aſſyrian, then the Perſian; the Grecian, and the Roman Monarchs were alſo broken in pieces: This was revealed to the golden head in a dream, (*Dan. 2. 35.*) *Then was the Iron, the Clay, the Braſſe, the Silver, and the Gold broken in pieces, and became like the chaffe of the Summer threshing floor.* The mighty men of Iſrael, (when they ſinned mightily) the mighty men of the ten Tribes, yea the mighty men of the two Tribes of *Judah* and *Benjamin*, God brake in pieces; his own mighty people could not ſtand before him, when they corrupted themſelves, and would not be made clean. God breaketh mighty men, as eaſily as they break his commandments: And uſually when mighty men come to that height of ſinning, to ſin, or break his Commandments with eaſe, he commands them (for his own eaſe, as he is pleaſed to ſpeak *Iſa. 1. 24.*) to be broken in pieces. To ſin with eaſe, is a ſure ſigne of a hard heart, yea of a prophane heart. He was a mighty man of this temper, whoſe breaking in pieces the Lord threatned in ſuch wrathful Rhetorick by his holy Prophet, (*Ezek. 21. 25, 26, 27.*) *And thou prophane wicked Prince of Iſrael, whoſe day is come, when iniquity ſhall have an end; thus ſaith the Lord God, Remove the Diadem, and take off the Crown: this ſhall not be the ſame, Exalt him that is low, and abaſe him that is high. I will overturn, overturn, overturn, and it ſhall be no more, until he come whoſe right it is, and I will give it him.* What breaking words are here! Even a treble overturn denounc'd againſt the mighty. Thus ſaid the bleſſed Virgin while her ſoul was magnifying the Lord, and her Spirit rejoycing in God her Saviour, (*Luke 1. 52.*) *He hath put down the mighty from their ſeats, and exalted them of low degree.*

Secondly, *In that, he breaketh in pieces the mighty without number,*

Obſerve.

'Tis no matter to God either how mighty or how many the wicked are.

I have heretofore ſpoken of the multiplyed acts of Divine Juſtice, and of the unwearied out-goings of his powerful providence to abate the pride of man, and therefore I ſhall not ſtay
upon

upon it, but only caution the mighty ones of the earth, in the words of the Psalmist upon this point, exprest in the very words of this Text ; for, God having said to his Son, to whom he had given the Nations for an inheritance, (*Psalm. 2. 9.*) Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, and (in case of their non-submission to his Scepter) dash them in pieces like a Potters vessel, he presently adds, (*ver. 10.*) *Be wise now therefore, O ye Kings, be instructed ye Judges of the earth ; serve the Lord with fear, and rejoyce with trembling ; Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way.*

Yet though God be often at breaking work, he is not alwayes at it ; for when he hath broken in pieces mighty men without number, he (as it followeth in the Text) will

Set others in their stead.

We may suppose these words given in upon a two-fold account.

First, To shew the absoluteness of the power of God, as well in setting up, as in casting down:

Secondly, To shew that we need not be dismayed nor discouraged, when we see God breaking in pieces some or many mighty men, for he can finde out others to supply their room, and fill up the breaches which he hath made. *He sets others in their stead.* *Ne eos hoc cre-*
atur deperire
humani generis
statum, addit &
stare facit alios,
Aquin. The force of the Hebrew is, *He shall make others to stand ;* and that's more then barely to set another in the stead or place of those that are removed and broken. God is able not only when many fall to raise up others, but he can also establish and settle those whom he raiseth up. That's the meaning of *Elihu*, when he saith

And set others in their stead.

Elihu doth not determine who or what these others are ; God may make his choice where and of whom he pleaseth, in what family or tribe he pleaseth, to set up in the place of those mighty men, whom he, at any time, is provoked to break in pieces. The words are plain ; Note only two things from them.

First, *God hath as absolute a power to set up, as to pull down when and whom he pleaseth.*

(Psal. 75. 6, 7.) *Promotion cometh neither from the East; nor from the West, Nor from the South, but God is the Judge, he putteth down one, and setteth up another.* The same Sovereignty of God is asserted, (Dan. 4. 17.) *To the intent that the living may know, that the most high ruleth in the Kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will, and setteth up over it the basest of men.* God sometimes setteth up those that are base in their conditions or manners for a scourge or punishment; sometimes he setteth up those that are base in their state or condition, being either men of meanest birth, or men laid lowest by affliction, (Psal. 113. 7, 8.) *He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil; that he may set him with Princes, even with the Princes of his people.* No man is so poor, but the Lord can enrich him; no man so low, but he can raise him up. He can bring a man from a dunghil to a Palace, and from the dust to a Throne. *Saul was cast down, God broke him in pieces, though a mighty man, and set up David in his stead; He chose David his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds, from following the Ewes great with young, he brought him to feed Jacob his people, and Israel his Inheritance:* (Psal. 78. 70. 71.) When God pull'd down Haman (the great favourite of *Ahasuerus*) who had plotted to advance *Mordecai* to the gallows, and ruine the whole seed of the Jewes, God did not only break him and his plor, but really advanced *Mordecai* into greater favour and confidence with his Prince then ever *Haman* had before.

Secondly, Note from the force of the word, *to make to stand.*

The Lord can establish those whom he setteth up.

The Lord doth not only set up, but keep up whom he pleaseth. Though they are weak whom he setteth up, yet he can keep them up; though they whom he setteth up, are opposed by the strong, yet he can keep them up. He can make a shrub stand fast, though opposed by a Cedar; and a reed to stand firm like a rock, though opposed by an Oak.

Thirdly, Note.

The Lord taketh care of the Government of the world.

He is not for breaking work only, he is for setting and settling too. God will not let the body of a people perish for want of a head; but when in judgement he hath broken one in pieces, he
in

in mercy sets up another. Mighty men are like pillars, which bear the weight of a whole Commonwealth or Kingdom. God rarely deals with Nations, as *Sampson* did with the house wherein the Philistims were assembled, who at once pull'd away the pillar, and pull'd down the house; but if he pulleth away one pillar, he puts in another, that the house may stand. God will not leave the world without rule or rulers: when he takes with one hand; he gives with another; when *Judas* the Traytor was broken; Christ found out (a better man) *Matthias* to set in his stead. And when the whole Nation or Church of the Jewes was broken and rejected, God called in the Gentiles, and set them up for a Church and people to himself in their stead; and (which is the greatest instance of all) when Jesus Christ was taken from the earth, when he left the world, who was the mighty one (he was first broken in pieces for our sins, and afterwards taken away) yet he gave a supply, and left us another in his stead; *I will not leave you comfortless*, (saith he *John* 14. 18.) *I will come unto you*, though not till the great day in person, yet every day in the gifts and graces of my Spirit. *I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever*; (*John* 14. 16.) Again, (*John* 16. 13.) *When he the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all truth*. God sent the Spirit in Christ's stead; he doth that for us which Christ did for us while he abode on the earth: and therefore the holy Spirit is not unfitly call'd the Vicar of Christ here on earth, he feeds the flock of Christ, he looks to his people, he teacheth, he comforteth them in Christ's stead. And thus in Nations, when God breaketh one Governour, he sets up an other in his stead; he will not leave Nations without guides and leaders, nor suffer the staff of Government to be utterly broken, which is the greatest plague that can come upon any people. From the whole verse take these tree deductions.

First, *There is a vanity and an uncertainty, at least the vanity of uncertainty in all worldly greatness and powers.*

God blasts and breaks them as he pleaseth: The most substantial things on earth are but as a shadow; or like the Land-sea's continually flowing and ebbing. One is cast down, and another is exalted; one is broken, and another is set up; yea, the same man who was lately exalted and set up, may quickly be cast down and broken.

broken. There is no assurance to be had of the best things here below, but only this, that we cannot be sure of them : and 'tis good for us, that we cannot be sure of the best things here below, both because we are so apt to say, *It is good for us to be here*, where yet our best things are not to be had, as also because by this consideration we may be provoked to look after, and make sure of better things than any are here enjoyed, even those best things which are under hope.

Secondly, *Great examples of God's judgements, are to be eyed and marked.*

Why doth *Elihu* call *Job* to this consideration, but that he might be humbled, and give God glory ; it is not for nought that God breaks in pieces the mighty ones of the earth, (1 Cor. 10. 11.) *All these things have hapned unto them for ensamples ; and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* As all those things among the Jewes were Types ; so all that God doth to this day upon the Princes, and Powers of the world, are but as types and ensamples ; they are for admonition, that we should consider those sins which have brought such judgements upon men, such breaking judgements, and avoid them. some will never see sin in it self, but in the judgments of God all may see what sin is ; when mighty men are broken in pieces, what will God do with the rest, if they sin against him, and provoke the eyes of his glory ? *Zenacharib* that proud Prince, who invaded the land of Israel in the time of *Hezekiah*, being broken in pieces by his own bowels (his sons slew him) it was ordered to be writ upon his Tomb, *Let every one that seeth me, learn to fear God, and not to despise him, as I have done.* The breaking of the powers of the earth, should exceedingly exalt the fear of God in our hearts. *It is better to learn wisdom by the punishment of others, than by our own.*

Thirdly, If God will break the mighty, though many, yea though innumerable ; This is comfort to the people of God when they are oppressed, and broken by oppressors, let them remember God is able to break their oppressors, though they rise up like Hydra's heads one after another ; read the whole fifty and second Psalm, as also the 39th and 40th verses of the 107th Psalm, as a clear proof of this. *Elihu* having shewed what sad breaches God makes upon *Hecuba*, Act: mighty men, makes a fourth inference in the words following.

Verf.

Nunquam cul-
pam suam re-
probi nisi in
pena agnos-
cunt. Greg. lib.
25. Moral.
cap. 9.

hi me intuent
pissu esto. He-
rod. lib. 2.

Quicunque
celsa domina-
tur aulame vi-
deat & tu Tro-
ja, nunquam do-
cumenta dedit
sors majora,
quam fragili
loco starent su-
perbi. Senec. in
Troad. de
Hecuba, Act:
7. Sc. 1.

Vers. 25. *Therefore he knoweth their works, and he overturneth them in the night, so that they are destroyed.*

For as much as God breaketh them, it is an argument that he knoweth what they are, and what they have been doing; There is a threefold reading of these words.

First, Some read them as implying God's making others to know their works, God maketh the secret sins of men visible, by his visible judgements. Wrath seen, may give us a sight of sin. Some insist much upon this exposition; and 'tis a truth, the Lord by his judgments brings to light, and doth as it were spread open, as in the face of the Sun, the wickedness and wicked deeds of mighty men: that all may know his judgements are deserved by their works, he makes their works known. *Propterea facit ut nota sint facta ipsorum. Bez. יכיר cognoscit aliqui exponunt faci, cognoscere, sc. facit ut ab omnibus eorum secretis cognoscantur. Merc.*

Secondly, Others render, *He maketh them know or acknowledge their works*; The Lord at last by sore, and severe judgements, will extort confessions from the worst of them, he will make the mighty acknowledge that their works have been nought, and their ways perverse. In Scripture the same word signifies to know, or to confess and acknowledg. Thus here, he makes them to know or to acknowledge what their works have been.

Thirdly, Rather take it, as we render, of Gods act in taking notice of all they had done; *Therefore he knoweth their works*: As if *Elihu* had said, these mighty men of the earth, thought themselves under covert, or that the Lord took no notice of them, nor of their works, their works were done in the dark, and they supposed the Lord could not pierce into them; but he will make it appear, that he knew their works, when he maketh his justice appear in punishing them for their works. *הכיר non significat notum facio quod sciam, sed tantum cognosco, ideo transiit cognoscit. Drus.*

Hence Note.

We have an assurance that God knoweth the works of all men, because he punisheth all wicked works, or the works of the wicked so punctually and exactly.

He punisheth many of them here, and will punish them all hereafter: when we see him breaking the mighty men of the world, 'tis a proof that God was in their Cainer counsels, and saw what was done there, we may conclude he knew their works, though men knew them not; he could never lay his judgements so exactly

actly upon them as he doth, if he did not know their works : That God knows the works of all men, is a point I have met with before, and therefore pass from it here.

And he overturneth them in the night.

There are several readings of this clause.

First, Some thus, *Therefore the Lord knoweth their works, and turneth into night* ; that is, he turneth their prosperity into adversity, he bringeth trouble and affliction upon them ; they lived before in a day of prosperity, in a day of power and worldly greatness, but he turneth them into night.

Secondly, Or, as others thus, *He turneth the night*, that is, he changeth the night into day, he takes away the dark and close covers of their sins, and makes them as manifest as the light ; Now, as the Apostle saith (Eph. 5. 13.) *That which maketh manifest, is light* ; If God were not light, he could not bring to light the hidden things of darkness, nor manifest the counsels of the heart.

*Simul atque
mutavit notum
Eccl. Jun. i. e.
Lucem protu-
lit, qua reve-
lantur omnia in
judicio ejus. Id.*

Thirdly thus, *Therefore he knoweth their works, and when the night is turned, he destroyeth them* ; that is, they are destroyed and perish as soon and as easily as the day takes place of the night ; or as soon as the night is turned into day, so soon doth the Lord destroy them, he can quickly make an end of them, he can destroy them with the morning light.

We render, and I judge that best, *He overturneth them* (their persons) *in the night* ; and so *Elihu* points at the season, or time, of Gods breaking and overthrowing them, he doth it *in the night*. We may take it strictly, as in the case of *Pharaoh* and the Egyptians, (*Exod. 12. 29.*) as also in that of *Belshazzar*, (*Dan. 5. 30.*) or, *in the night*, that is, suddenly, unexpectedly ; Though a man be destroyed in the day, yet if it be done suddenly, he looking for no such matter, we may say it was done in the night ; because then men are most secure : This way of expressing an unlookt for evil, the coming of in the night, was opened at the twentieth verse, therefore I shall not stay upon it, *He overturneth them in the night.*

So that they are destroyed.

Elihu said before *He shall break in pieces mighty men* ; Here he saith, *they are destroyed* ; that is, they shall be broken to purpose,

or throughly; God doth not break them in pieces for correction, but for destruction; there are great breakings upon the persons and estates of some men, and yet it is but for correction; others the Lord breaketh for utter ruine, (as here) *so that they are destroyed.* The Original word signifieth to destroy as it were by ^{כנן} contri- pounding in a Morter; and the same word is used to signifie *a vit, amittit, contrite heart, a heart broken by godly sorrow under the sense of sin.* ^{contudit.} *They are destroyed,* or, as it were ground to powder; you may break a thing into many pieces, yet not grinde it to powder or dust, as corn in a Mill, or spice in a Morter; but these (saith *Elihu*) are not only broken to pieces, but beaten to dust, that's the strength of the word which we render, *they are destroyed.*

Hence Note.

What God hath a mind to do, he can do it certainly, and will do it throughly.

He breaks men in pieces, *so that they are destroyed and brought to dust*; When the Prophet declares the breaking of the four Monarchies, it is said (*Dan. 2. 35.*) *They shall be as the chaffe of the Summer threshing upon the Mountains*; if the Lord will destroy the mightiest, they shall certainly be destroyed; as *Balak* said to *Balaam*; *I wot that whom thou cursest are cursed*; as if he had said, thou canst curse effectually, if thou wilt set thy self to it; 'tis not in the power of all the *Balaams* in the world to effect a curse, though they pronounce a curse, 'tis only in the power of the Lord to curse effectually; he can bless whom he pleaseth, and they are blessed; he can curse whom he pleaseth, and they are cursed. Thus as *Ephraim* lamenting his sin and sorrow confessed, (*Jer. 31. 18.*) *Lord, thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*; God paid him home (as we speak) if we chastise a childe, he is chastised, but when *Ephraim* saith, *thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*; his meaning is, I was greatly and effectually chastised; that is, first, In a literal sence, I found thy hand heave upon me, it was a sore affliction that I was under. Secondly, In a spiritual sence; *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised*; that is, my heart was humbled and broken under thy chastisements; in either notion we see the effectualness of the Lords work; *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised.* And therefore *Ephraim* invited the Lord to another work; *Turn me, O Lord,*

and I shall be turned ; if thou wilt but turn thy Spirit upon this hard heart of mine, it will be effectually turned, it will be not only broken-for sin, but from sin: As if he had said, I have received reproofs and counsels from men, and they have not turned me, but Lord, if thou wilt reprove and counsel me, I shall be turned ; thus the Lord carrieth his work home to conversion, in his spiritual dealings with some, and to confusion in his temporal punishments upon others. Thus he threatned his owne people for their confidence in Egypt, and contempt of his holy word (Isa. 30. 13.) This iniquity shall be unto you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant. And he shall breake it as the breaking of a potters vessel, that is broken in pieces, he shall not spare ; so that there shall not be found in the bursting of it, a sherd to take fire from the hearth, or to take water withall out of the pit ; that is, ye shall be made utterly uselesse and unserviceable. That piece of a vessel is of no use, which will not serve for either of those little uses, the taking of a little fire from the hearth, or a little water out of the pit. And if God sometime breake his owne professing people thus small for their sins, how small will he breake his professed enemies ! read for this the last breaking and down-fall of Babylon (Rev. 18. 21, 22, 23.) Therefore take heed how you fall into the Lords hand ; for he can not only break you in pieces, but break you to powder, he can break you to destruction : The Lords purposes, and the effects of them, his works, are never without effect, for good or evil, for the better or for the worse.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 26, 27, 28.

He striketh them as wicked men, in the open sight of others:

Because they turned back from him, and would not Consider any of his wayes.

So that they cause the cry of the poor to come unto him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.

ELihu having in the former words shewed the impartiall vengeance of God upon the wicked, proceedeth to shew two things further about it in these words.

First, The manner of it, v. 26. *He striketh them as wicked men in the open sight of others.*

Secondly, The causes, grounds, or reasons of it in the 27th and 28th verses; why doth God strike them? it is *because they turned back from him, and would not Consider any of his wayes; So that they cause the Cry of the poore to come unto him; their impiety in turning from God, and their iniquity in oppressing the poor, provoked the Lord to strike them as wicked men in the open sight of others.*

Vers. 26. *He striketh them as wicked men.*

The word which we render *strike*, specially notes the striking of one hand against the other; our hands clasp, or struck together, make a sound, or noise: Thus some Interpret the word here, *He strikes them with an Ignominious sound.* Many rejoyce and clap their hands when they fall; They are destroyed with shouring. Others take the metaphor from a bladder filled with winde, which being cast on the ground, and stampd upon with the foot, breaks with a noise, or gives a crack in the breaking: Wicked men, in all they thinke, and purpose, and doe, are but wind, and when they break, they break like bladders, which have nothing of solidity, only breath and fume in them. Such an Elegancy there is in this word, hitting the vanity and vacuity or emptiness of wicked

Per percussit volam ad vocem, adversus manus collisit. Significat aliquid cum sono deicere vel collidere; unde aliqui de ejestione ignominiosa cum sibilis exponunt. Alij volunt per metaphoram a ventis, quae per de compressa cum sonitu ruptur. Scult: Pro improborum complexit eos. Tharg: In loco improborum complexit eos. Jun

men, all their filling being but like that of a bladder, which pusses them up, but never makes them wise or solid men.

Further, I find this word used for striking in a three-fold sense.

First, For striking with sorrow and shame; such was that of repenting Ephraim (Jer: 31. 19.) *Who when he thought on his wayes, was ashamed and smote upon his thigh.*

Secondly, For striking with icorne and derision (Lam: 2. 15.) *All that passe by clap their hands at thee, they hisse and wagge their head at the daughter of Jerusalem.*

Thirdly, There is also a striking with anger and indignation; Thus Balak being vext, because he could not have his purpose to bribe Balaam to curse the people of God, *Smote his hands together* (Numb: 24. 10.) and the Lord himselfe is exprest expressing his angry indignation against his owne people the Jewes, by this gesture (Ezek. 22. 13.) *Behold therefore I have smitten my hands at thy dishonest gaine, &c.* There is then a speciall Emphasis in the smiting or striking here intended, besides the generall meaning of it. The Lord destroyes wicked men in such a manner, that all who behold it are filled with the admiration of his righteousness, and with a detestation of their lewdnesse. The Septuagint say, *He hath Extinguished wicked men*; As if they were but smoaking firebrands, or the stinking snuffe of a candle. Another renders it, *He binds them*, the word signifying also to bind or straighten; The Lord brings forth evill men, as it were, bound hand and foot to Judgement. We say clearely, *He striketh them*, and that in no ordinary way, but

As wicked men.

Expositio Jē
Expositio; Ex-
tinxit autem
impior. Sept:
Pro impijs
strinxit eos.
Bold: i.e. vin-
culis funibusq;
ligare fecit eos
tanquam impios
atq; iraspedan-
dos palam de-
duci et proponi.
Bold:

causalis
est, propterea
quod impij sunt.
Illud quasi se-
pe non simili-
tudinem sed ve-
ritatem signifi-
cat; et idem
valet quod ut-
roque, &c.

So we translate; yet the particle which we render, *as*; may (here according to its frequent use else-where) carry in it a reason, *He strikes them because they are wicked*; so some read the text, not as we by way of similitude, how God striketh them, but as giving an account why God striketh them, even because they are wicked men. Mr Broughton saith, *For the wicked he maketh plenti- full riddance of them*, which hath a good sense in it, but takes some- what too great a liberty with the original text; And because the reason of this striking is held forth in the verses following, it is more distinct to say he strikes them (not because they are wicked

men,

men, but) *as wicked men*; that is, as wicked men use to be stricken, or as they use to be proceeded against in a way of Justice. God striketh the *mighty men* (of whom he spake before) as common offenders or malefactors.; Though they are great on earth, yea though they are (in title) Gods upon earth, yet God strikes them as the basest of wicked men, they shall not only *dye* (as 'tis sayd, *Psal. 82. 7.*) or *fall like one of the Princes*, but they shall dye like the worst of men, like wicked men.

Hence note.

First, *They that doe like the wicked, shall be dealt with by God as the wicked, how high, or mighty soever they are in this world.*

And as they who are openly wicked shall be dealt with as wicked men, though they be high in the world; so they that are really wicked shall be dealt with as wicked men, though they make a high profession of godliness in the Church, even them will God strike also as wicked men. Christ speakes of some (*Math: 7. 22.*) who made a loud profession of religion, with whom yet he dealt as with wicked men: *Depart from me* (saith he) *I know ye not, ye workers of iniquity.* Though God doth not deal alike with all wicked men, yet he deales with them all like wicked men. There is not one wicked man in the world, but he shall be dealt with according to his kind, that is, as a wicked man, and shall have that for his portion which is the portion of their Cup, who are wicked. As the Godly, so the wicked, whether prophane or false and hypocriticall, shall be esteemed and handled by God like themselves, or as they are.

Secondly, From the first word, as it is taken causally, (upon which many insist) Note.

The reason why wicked men are stricken is because they are wicked.

Were not men wicked they should never feelee such stroakes from the hand or rather iron rod of God. If any smart and are ruin'd, they may thank themselves for it, that is, their sins for it; their sufferings are the fruits of their sin. The Prophet told the sinfull Jewes so (*Jer. 4. 18.*) they had an affliction upon them, which *did reach even to the heart*; God made their hearts ake, he struck them to the heart; but why did he so? the answer is;

Thy;

Thy sin and thy doings have procured these things to thee, &c. He striketh them as wicked men.

In the open sight of others.

Locus videntium, locus patens frequens celebris, omnium oculis expositus. Par: Importat visionem paradigmaticam et exemplarem. Merc:

These words are a further description of the manner how God strikes the wicked, he doth it openly, or (as we put in the margin) *In the place of beholders*, that is, in such a place, and in such a manner that all may behold it: we say, *He strikes them in the open sight of others*; that is, he punisheth them in an exemplary way, or that they may be an example of warning unto others. For, *The place of seers, or of beholders*, is some open and eminent place exposed to a Corner; as *Paul* sayd pleading his cause before king *Agrippa* (Acts 26. 26.) *This thing was not done in a Corner*; no, it was done, as upon the house-top, even in the place of beholders. The Lord will not have to doe with wicked men only in a Corner. He will have witnesses of his doings with them. There shall be enow to take notice how he handles them, therefore he often takes open vengeance on them, in the frequent assembly and course of many beholders, both approving and reverencing, yea adoring the impartiall equity of the supream Judge, and his care of humane affaires. So then, the words are an allusion to the execution of Common malefactors, who dye by the Judgement of the Magistrate, such being condemned and sentenced by the Judge, are not put to death in the prison, or in a hole, but are taken out and carried to some noted place of execution, or a Scaffold is purposely erected, where a multitude of spectators are admitted to come and behold the Tragedy. When our Lord Jesus Christ, who (to deliver us from our transgressions) *was numbered with transgressors*, when he (I say) was crucified; The Evangelist saith (Luke 23. 35.) *The people stood beholding, and the Rulers also with them derided him*. Christ himselfe was stricken as a wicked man in the place of Beholders. And so have many thousands of his faithfull witnesses. The wicked deale with them often, as the Lord dealeth sometimes with wicked men, they are brought forth from prison to death, and executed in the open sight of others. *All things* (in this world) *come alike to all, no man knoweth love or hatred by all that is before them* (Eccl: 9. 1; 2.) The Apostle *Paul* speaking of himselfe and his fellow-Apostles (to shew the publick disgrace which they were put to) saith, *We are made a spectacle*

Spectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men (1 Cor: 4. 9.) The Greeke is, we are a *Theater to the world*, &c. As if he had sayd, all see how we are used; And as bloody persecuters make the faithfull servants of Christ a spectacle, so Christ will at last make wicked men a spectacle to the world, to Angels, and to men. Thus it is prophesied (*Isa: 66. 24.*) that *all flesh who come to worship before the Lord, shall goe forth and looke upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against him, &c.* They shall be stricken in the place of Beholders or Seers.

Some expound that word *Seers*, as implying more then ordinary seers, or more then barely such as see what is done; namely, such as are delighted and pleased with what is done, yet not as it is a suffering of paine by man, but as it is an act of Justice from God.

Videre sapienter significat cum voluptate aliquid spectare.
Scult:

Hence note.

God oftentimes doth Justice upon sinners openly.

The Judgements of God are of two sorts: Some are secret, others are manifest; he can doe execution upon men when none see it; nay he doth the severest executions upon some men when they themselves doe not see it (that's the sting and severity of the Judgement, that) they have not so much as any sence of the wrath of God, when the full vials of his wrath are powring out upon them. But many of the Judgements of God are open; As he striketh some so secretly, that none can see it, so others so visibly that all may see it. Thus the Lord commanded *Moses* (*Numb: 25. 4.*) when *Israel* had joyned themselves unto *Baal-peor*, *Take all the heads of the people and hang them up before the Lord against the Sun.* By the heads of the people, we may understand either the capitall offenders, those who were most active and ready in that wickednesse; or their principall Rulers, who instead of stopping them from or punishing them for those offences, gave way to them or at least wincked at them: These must be hanged against the Sun, that is, as *Elihu* speaks here, *in the open sight of others, or in the place of seers.* Thus they were made an example of caution that all might see and feare and doe no more presumptuously. Read the like executions of divine Judgement threatned (*2 Sam. 12. 11, 12. Isa. 26. 11.*) *John* in the Revelation (*Chap: 15. 4.*) prophesyeth of the Saints triumphing at the fall of *Babylon*, and

finishing

singing the song of *Moses*, and the song of the *Lambe*, saying, *Great and marvellous are thy workes*, &c. for thy Judgements are made manifest: God hath now stricken *Babylon* his great enemy in the open sight of others; his Judgements were right before, (they are alwayes right) but till then not manifest. *David* saith (*Psal. 9. 16.*) *The Lord is knowne by the Judgement which he executeth*: now if the Lord be knowne by the Judgement which he executeth; then the Judgement which he executeth must be knowne; it must be an open Judgement; and such are very many of the Judgements of God, they are acted as upon a stage. And I may give you an account in three particulars why the Lord will sometimes doe Justice, *in the place of beholders, or in the open sight of others.*

First, That there may be witnesses enow of what he doth, and so a record of it kept, at least in the minds and memories of faithfull men for the generations to come.

Secondly, The Lord doth it not onely that he may have witnesses of his Justice, but also that his Justice and the proceedings of it, may have an effect and a fruit upon those who did not feele it, nor fall under it. This was the reason why the Lord threatned to punish *Jerusalem* in the sight of the nations (*Ezek. 5. 5, 6, 7, 8, 14, 15.*) Thus saith the Lord God, *this is Jerusalem, I have set it in the midst of the nations and Countreyes that are round about her.*

Jerusalem dicitur medium terræ, utpote quæ sit in quarto climata ideo autem urbem in medio mundi constitutam et quasi in loco violentium elegit deus, ut sciant beneficia ita et supplicia eorum omnibus essent conspicua.
Pine.

God is sayd (*Psal. 74. 12.*) *To work salvation in the midst of the Earth*; that is, in *Jerusalem*, or among his people, who were placed as it were in the Center, and middle part of the world: not that *Jerusalem* stood exactly in the midst of the world, but because many Nations stood about it, that might well be called a City standing in the midst of the nations; and therefore it is added (*v. 8.*) Thus saith the Lord God, *Behold I, even I am against thee, and will execute Judgement in the midst of thee, in the sight of the nations.* God would execute Judgement in *Jerusalem* a City placed in the midst of the nations, that as the nations had taken notice of the extraordinary favours, benefits, deliverances, and salvations which God wrought for *Jerusalem*; so they might also take notice of his judgements and sore displeasure against them. *Jerusalem* was not seated in some nooke, corner, or by-place of the world, but in the midst of the nations, that both the goodnesse and severity of God towards them might be conspicuous; And that
the

the nations round about seeing the sufferings of that people for their sin, might feare and tremble to sin as they had done; for if *Jerusalem* the seate of instituted worship and Gods peculiar people were not spared when they provoked God, their neighbours might well conclude, surely we shall not be spared: As the Lord himselfe argued it against those uncircumcised nations (*Jer. 25. 20.*) *Behold I will bring evill upon the City that is called by my name, and should ye goe utterly unpunished?* Certainly no! If God punish his own people in the sight of the heathenish nations when they doe wickedly, what then are heathen nations to expect, who doe nothing but wickednesse?

And this (by the way) may give the Alarme, and be a very awaking consideration to all the Churches and people of God at this day throughout the world. If God did strike *Jerusalem* of old, that is, his people there, *as wicked men* even in the open sight of others; if the Lord was so wroth with his people, that he polluted his inheritance, and gave them into the hand of the Chaldeans (*Isa. 47. 6.*) *If he forsooke his house and left his heritage, and gave the dearly beloved of his soule into the hands of her enemies* (*Jer. 12. 7.*) and sayd (*v. 9.*) *Mine heritage is to me as a speckled bird, the birds round about her are against her; yea if he* (in the close of that verse) *invited the worst of men under the name of beasts to spoyle them, Come ye, assemble all the beasts of the field come to devoure;* Now (I say) If God struck his ancient people, the Jewish Church, as wicked men, by wicked men, in the open sight of others, O let the Gentile Churches take heed, lest they also be stricken after the same manner. Many Churches in *Germany* and else-where have been stricken so already in this last age, let the remnant both there and else-where remember themselves and give glory to God, before he cause such darknesse to come upon them, and strike them also *as wicked men in the open sight of others.*

God lets some sinners suffer or punisheth them openly, both because he would have all others take notice that he dislikes what they have done, as also because he would not have others doe the like, lest they be made like them, both in the matter and manner of their sufferings. *'Tis a favour (as well as our duty) to be taught by other mens harmes, and to be instructed by their strokes, to prevent our own.*

And as the Lord strikes some wicked men openly, that others

may feare and not doe the like, so, that they who have done the like may be humbled for, and repent of what they have done. God doth not alwayes powre out the same Judgements upon all those that have done the same wickedness, (the whole world would be in blood if he did so) but he takes here and there one that the rest bethinking themselves, and (with repenting *Ephraim*) smiting upon their thigh, may prevent the Lord from smiting them at all, especially from striking them as wicked men in the open sight of others. It is sayd (*Rev. 11. 13.*) *that, after by a great earth-quake the tenth part of the City fell, and in the earth-quake were slaine of men seven thousand, the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of heaven.* And surely the reason why after one man hath been chastised or stricken, others take their turnes too, is because they did not take warning by his chastisements and sufferings. Did we but mind the scope of God in punishing any openly, the striking of one might save hundreds, or thousands from being stricken; but because men are so secure, and so slow to take warning by what God doth to others, therefore they are called forth one after another, to suffer and feel his heavy hand in their own persons.

Thirdly, God strikes some wicked men in open view, or in the place of beholders for the comfort of his own people, and for their encouragement (*Psal. 58. 10, 11.*) *The righteous shall be glad when he seeth the vengeance;* not that he shall be glad of the vengeance, purely as it is a hurt, or a suffering to the creature, but the righteous shall be glad when he seeth the vengeance of God, as it is a fulfilling of the threatning of God against the sin of man, and an evidence of his own holiness. (*Psal. 64. 9, 10.*) *God shall shoot suddenly at the wicked, all that see them shall flee away;* that is, they that see how God deales with them, shall get away, least ruine overtake them, or they shall flee away (which is their best course) from such courses and practices as procured them that ruine. Thus the righteous rejoyce when they see the vengeance, yea *they wash their feet in the blood of the ungodly;* that is, they get comfort and encouragement by seeing the Lord avenge their cause against their adversaries. It is sayd (*Exod. 14. 30, 31.*) *that God having overwhelmed the Egyptians in the red Sea, the Israelites saw the Egyptians dead upon the shoar;* God did not suffer the carcasses of the *Egyptians* to sink to the bottom of the
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the Sea, but caused them to lie upon the shoar, that the *Israelites* might see them: And when *Israel* saw that dreadfull stroak of the Lord upon the *Egyptians*, It is sayd, *The people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord and his servant Moses*: Thus they were confirmed in their faith by Gods open Judgements upon the *Egyptians*; They were smitten in the place of beholders, or in the open sight of others.

There are yet two other interpretations of these words, which I shall touch.

He striketh them in the *place of beholders*, that is (saith my Author) in such an estate or condition wherein themselves might see, both by that natural light which every man hath, & especially by the light of doctrine and instruction, what they ought to doe, and what to shun or avoyd. In this sense to be smitten in the place of Seers, is, to see and behold, to have light and understanding what to doe, or forbear doing, and yet to act against that light, and so provoke the Lord to strike us; which is a great aggravation both of the sin, and punishment of man.

A second gives it thus, *He striketh them in the place of seers*, or where they saw; that is, he striketh them in the eye of their understanding, or in their Judgement, he striketh them with spiritual blindness, as the *Sodomites* were with corporall, so that they are not able to see their way, or what becomes them to doe. This is a most severe stroake. There are many who when they have abused the light, and would not doe what they saw they ought, God hath struck them with such blindness, that they should not see what they ought to doe. Both these are rather tropologicall Expositions then literall, yet they may have their use and improvement by way of allusion. In this place *Elihu* having thus held out the openness and exemplariness of the judgements of God upon wicked men, proceeds in the following words, to shew the equity and righteousness of them.

Vers. 27. *Because they have turned back from him, and would not Consider any of his wayes.*

Here, I say, lest any should surmise that God takes vengeance without cause, the cause is named and assigned why God takes vengeance; 'tis *because they turned back from him*, they in the pride

and stoutnesse of their hearts (which great men especially are much subiect to) refused to obey and follow God , and therefore his wrath followed and brake them.

They turned back from him.

כִּחְרִי

*Verbum ē ver-
bo; de post eum
sic alibi, scorta-
ti sunt, de post
dominum. i. e.
deserto domino.*

There is a two-fold turning back ; First, Corporall ; Secondly, Morall or spirituall , none can corporally turn back from God, though some attempt it ; to what hiding place soever we turn our selves, we cannot be hid from him who filleth every place ? But there are many who morally turn back and depart from the living God. Sinners would turn their persons back from God, and hide their heads, they would get quite out of his sight and reach, though they cannot ; but all of them turn back from God in their hearts.

In two respects sinners in generall, may be sayd to turne back from God ; First, when he commands and they will not obey him, or withdraw their obedience from his commandements ; Secondly, when he entreates and invires them, and they will not come to him, nor accept his tendered respects and favours. Thus the Lord complained of his owne people (*Psal. 81. 11.*) *Israel would none of me ;* God wooed them , but they had other lovers, and after them they would goe ; even *Israel* lightly regarded the God of *Israel*, yea they made a defection from him. More distinctly.

There is a three-fold turning back from God, or they who turne back from God are of three sorts.

First , There is a turning back from God ; by those who have openly followed him, or made profession of his name ; Thus hypocrites and formalists turne back from God. This the Scripture calls back-sliding, revolting, and going a whoring from God. Such as these , are like perfidious Souldiers , who enter and list themselves in an Army, marching with them for a while, & taking their pay , yet soon after forsake their colours , and turn to the enemy : Thus many apostatize from God to the Devill, and to the creature, or (as *Paul* sayd of *Demas*) *they forsake Christ and embrace this present world.* *Luther* was charged by his enemies that he was an Apostate, and he acknowledged, he was, but he thanked God for it, he indeed turned back from what he did once profess, but it was to a better profession ; he did not turne from God to the world, but he turned from the world to God, and that's a blessed

bleſſed Apoſtacy; he did not turn from truth to error, but from error to truth; he did not turn from pure worſhip to Idolatry and ſuperſtition, but from Idolatry and ſuperſtition to pure worſhip. How wretched is their condition who are indeed Apoſtates! who turn from God to the world, from truth to error, from pure worſhip to Idolatry and ſuperſtition, from a holy converſation to prophaneſs, looſeneſs and liberteniſme, to a compliance with the world, and a ſymbolizing with them in their luſts and wickedneſſe. This abominable apoſtacy is a fruit of hypocriſie, *Hypocrites turne only their faces to God, and Apoſtates turne their backs upon him, or, turn back from him.* And all they who turn only their faces unto God, will for their owne advantage, or to ſave themſelves turn their backs upon him. *Hypocrites when put to it, when the ſorme comes, ever prove Apoſtates.*

Secondly, There is a turning from God found even in the beſt followers of God; who is there among the Saines on earth that keepes conſtant un-interrupted communion with God? The leaſt degree of inordinate letting downe or turning the heart to the creature, is, a degree of turning back from God: As holineſs is our motion toward God, and to act holyly is to keep the eye of the ſoule alwayes upon God; ſo, unholineſs, is an averſion from God. *David* did not ſay, nor could he ſay (though as holy a man as lived) that he had never turned from God; he could only ſay that he had not wickedly departed from God (Pſal: 18. 21.)

Thirdly, There is a turning back from God, proper to all unregenerate perſons, whether they be ſuch as are civilly honeſt and poſſibly ſuch as doe not decline the outſide of that religion wherein they were borne and bred; or ſuch as are flagitious in their lives and wayes, ſcorniſh to own religion, and being even aſhamed of the wayes of God. Theſe may be ſayd to turn back from God, becauſe they have many calls to God, and are invited to come unto him; which yet they either neglect and mind not at all, or reſuſe and rejeſt, and ſo thruſt away God from them; and when the light comes, they love darkneſs rather then light, becauſe their deeds are evil (Joh: 3. 19.) Such were they of whom *Job* ſpake (Chap: 21. 14.) *They ſay to God depart from us:* he doth not intend it of Apoſtates in a ſtrict notion, who once made profeſſion of godlineſs; but he ſpeakes of common and prophane perſons, who have no mind at all to obey or walk with God, but
mind.

*Qui quasi d
industria reces-
serunt ab eo
vulg: sc: a deo
peccantes ex
certa malitia.
Aquino:*

mind only the fullfilling of their lusts, or the assayres of this present life ; and so their whole life is nothing else but a turning from God. Thus the vulgar translation renders the text with a good significancy, though not with a clearness to the Hebrew; *who have purposely turned from God* ; distinguishing them from those who through dayly Infirmitie turn from God, as the best of his people do; whereas, these sin willingly, yea wilfully and resolvedly against God. I conceive, the words of *Elibu* in this text are to be understood of turning from God in this third sence ; For he is not here speaking of those who were eminent professors before, and did Apostatize ; much less of those that turn from God by dayly failings in duty, or some neglect of duty ; but he is speaking of such, whose whole course of life is as a continued turning from God, themselves never having been wrought upon by the grace of conversion, or savingly turned to him. This third sort of turners back from God are most proper to the present text, though such also are within the reach and compasse of it, who doe wickedly after they have made faire pretensions to the best things. This is the reason why God striketh the mighty to destruction ; *They have turned back from God*. The reason being thus explicite and expresse, teacheth us,

First.

God never punisheth any man without cause.

God doth not alwayes shew the cause why he punisheth this or that man, but he never punisheth any man without cause ; if he striketh, 'tis because men turn back from him, either by a plain apostacy from what they once professed, or by a notorious course of impiety, refusing so much as to own his wayes or make profession. God electeth some, and passeth by others without respect to any thing in them ; *Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated ; God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy* (Rom: 9. 13, 15.) thus, I say, God electeth us without respect to any good in us ; but God never striketh or punisheth us, but with respect to some evill in us or done by us.

Secondly, Note.

It is the duty of all men to follow after God.

To follow God in his way, and to propose God as our end, containe

tain the summe of all duty. That, God hath made man and given him a being, that, he placed man in the highest forme of his visible creation, should draw man after him. We ought to follow God because we are his creatures, because we have our all from him, or because *in him we live, and move, and have our being*, as the Apostle speakes of mankind in generall, even of the heathens (*Acts 17. 28.*) And forasmuch as *we are his off-spring* (*v. 29.*) our hearts should spring, or rise up to him in love and thankfulness; as the rivers, because they come from the Sea, goe back thither: so we being the off-spring of God, and derived from him, should be alwayes returning to him. This nature tells us; And therefore the Apostle saith (*Acts 17. 27.*) *God hath made of one blood all nations of men, that they should seek after him, &c.* The light of nature, though dim and dark, shews that a man should feele after God, as a man in the dark doth after his way. And if all men ought to follow God, because they have their naturall life and breath from him; much more should believers, who have a new, a spirituall life breathed into them, and bestowed upon them, be alwayes following after God; And the truth is, where true faith, or the life of grace is, that soule cannot live without dayly returnings back to and breathings after God, even as meere carnal men, who are alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, are dayly turning back from him.

Hence thirdly, Note.

The whole life of every unconverted soule, and notorious sinner, is a turning from God.

They who set their faces sin-ward, turn their backs God-ward. They who pursue their lusts, their covetous, their ambitious purposes, they who gratifie the flesh, their pride, their luxury, their wantonness, their malice, what doe any of them, what doe all of them, but turn back from God? The best of Saints have their turnings from God, but they doe not make it their business to turn from him; their business is, to draw near, to keep close to God, to keep as it were in his eye; but as for the naturall man and gross sinner, his business is a departing from God (*Heb: 3. 12.*) *Take heed* (saith the Apostle) *lest there be in any of you an evill heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.* He gives Caution

tion to the Church, ſearch your ſelves, leſt there be found in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, &c. Where unbelief remains in any meaſure unmortified, it may quickly doe a great deale of miſchiefe. And where it remains in full power or altogether unmortified, it doth all manner of miſchiefe. All which is wrapt up in that one word, *a departure from the living God*. Unbelief is the root of Apoſtacy ; The reaſon why ſinners turn from God, is, be-
 cauſe they give no Credit to the word of God ; they are not per-
 ſwaded God is ſuch a one as he hath declared himſelfe to be, and
 will either doe that for the obedient which he hath promiſed, or
 that againſt the rebellious which he hath threatned. They who be-
 lieve not in God cannot but depart from God ; And therefore the
 life of an unbeliever is a continuall departure from God. He ſets
 out with his back upon God ; the very firſt ſtep he takes into the
 world is from God. As ſoon as we are borne we naturally goe a-
 ſtray ſpeaking lyes ; we are ever out of our way, till we look to-
 ward God, and ayme at him ; which we never doe, till he by his
 mighty power changeth our hearts, turneth our courſe, and bring-
 eth us home to himſelfe.

Further, Conſider, how did theſe mighty men turn back from
 God ? they might ſay, where did we ſee God ? where did God
 appeare to us ? that we are thus charged with turning back from
 him ?

I anſwer ; Firſt, God manifeſts himſelfe to man in his workes,
 or in his providences. Secondly, He manifeſts himſelfe in every
 part of his word, eſpecially in his Commands, in his promiſes, and
 in his threatenings ; in his Commands, he manifeſts himſelfe a ho-
 ly God ; in his promiſes, a gracious and bountifull God ; in his
 threatenings, a juſt and righteous God, who will neither do wrong
 nor ſuffer himſelfe to be wronged. The Septuagint make this Ex-
 poſition the text, translating theſe words of *Elihu*, thus ; Be-
 cauſe they have turned from the Law of God.

ὅτι ἐξήλθον
 ἐκ νόμου θεοῦ.
*Quia declina-
 verunt de lege
 dei.* Sept.

Hence note.

They who turn from the word of God, turn back from God.

When a Command comes, if you ſlight the authority and obli-
 gation of it, you turn back from God ; when a promiſe comes, if
 you doe not believe the truth of it, and hope for the good of it,
 you turn back from God ; look what of the mind of God is mani-
 feſted

tested to you in the dispensation of the word, if you doe not obedientially close with it, you neglect to close with God himselfe, and while you turn from it, you turn from God himselfe. Thus the Apostle speakes concerning back-sliders (2 Pet: 2. 20, 21.) *If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ they are againe entangled therein and overcome, the latter end is worse with them then the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have knowne the way of God, then after they have knowne it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them; so that, a turning from the Commandement of God, is a turning from God himselfe; He turneth back from the holy commanding God, who turneth back from the holy commandment of God, and he turneth back from the God of the promise, who turneth back from the promise of God.*

Fifthly, Note.

As it is exceeding sinfull to turn back from God, so they who doe so, grow every day more and more sinful.

If a man be once upon a course of back-sliding and Apostatizing from the commands and promises of God, he will find himselfe worse and worse day after day; for still the further from God any man goeth, the more vaine he groweth; and the more doth lust get a hand over him. As unbeliefe is the roote of Apostacy from God, so Apostacy encreaseth all that wickednesse which is in man. As the cause of all evill, whether of punishment or of sin, is our departure and turning from God; so the very nature of sin is a turning from God; and therefore the more we turne from God, the more sinfull and the fuller of sin we are. As the neerer we come to God, the more holy and spirituall and heavenly we are (*while we with open face as in a glasse* (saith the Apostle, 2 Cor: 3. 18.) *Behold the glory of God* (that is, while we draw neere to him in his holy ordinances) *we are changed into the same image*, that is, we become more like to God) so the more we keep at a distance from God, the more unlike we are to him, that is, the more unholy we are. And as persons unconverted, or in an unholy state, are wholly alienated from the life of God, and cannot endure to come neere him; so it is in a degree by any of our withdrawings or turnings from him: we are made more unholy,

and are changed more into the image of those carnal and earthly things which we behold, and with which we over-intimately converse in the time of those withdrawals.

Lastly, Note.

A holy life consists in following of and keeping close to God.

Optima vivendi ratio est deum sequi.

Religiosissimus dei cultus est imitari quam colis. Laet: lib: 5. Instit: cap: 10.

To keep close to God is both a holy and a comfortable life ; 'Tis the perfection of Saints to walk with God : *Enoch* walked with God; and that was his holiness (*Gen: 5. 24.*) *Caleb* followed God fully, and that was his holiness. A spirituall life, is nothing else but our following God. *The most religious worship of God is to imitate whom we worship.* And our imitation of God is our following of God; no man can imitate any thing but when his eye is upon its pattern, or the Idea of it abides in his mind. And therefore it is sayd of the ungodly man (*Psal: 10. 4.*) *God is not in all his thoughts* (then followeth, *v. 5.*) *his wayes are alwayes grievous.* If God be not in the thoughts of a man; nothing of God is stamp't upon the wayes of that man. In vaine are we called Christians, unless we keep close to Christ, and in vaine doe any pretend to godliness, unless they walke with God. Jesus Christ hath called himselfe *the way* (*Joh 14. 6.*) chiefly upon this account; because by him we goe to the Father, and have acceptance with God by the grace of Justification; but Jesus Christ is the way also, of our Sanctification; we must walke in him, and as he walked (*1 Joh: 2. 6.*) that we may be holy: every departure from God lets the heart loose to sin. That which shall maintaine the Saints holiness to Eternity, is, *They shall alwayes behold the face of God*; they shall never turn back from God, they shall never be taken off one moment from the actuall vision, enjoyment and contemplation of God in glory; therefore they shall never be taken off from actuall holiness and purity, now in proportion, as we keep our hearts and spirits steady upon God, and doe not turn back from him, such is our holiness in this life; and as our holiness is, such will our comfort and peace and joy be in this life. For as because when we arrive at glory, we shall never turn back from God, much less turn our back's upon him, therefore in glory there is fullness of Joy, and pleasure for evermore; so the neerer we keep to God, and the closer we walke with him in this life, the fuller and more lasting will our joyes and pleasures be.

As in this former part of the 27th verse, we have had the first cause opened why God striketh the mighty as wicked men in the open sight of others, namely, their apostacy from God, *Because they turned back from him.* So in the latter part of this verse we have another reason assigned why God doth it, and that is, because

They would not Consider any of his wayes.

The word which we render *Consider*, signifies also to *understand* or *know*, which is an act precedent to consideration; Consideration is a contemplative act; by consideration we become more knowing, but we cannot consider any thing till we have some understanding or knowledge of it. And this word is often (in another Conjugation) used in the title of some speciall Psalmes. The 32^d Psalm, as also the 42^d Psalm, is called *Maschil*, as much as to say, *a teaching, or an instructing Psalm, a Psalm giving understanding and requirring deep and serious consideration.* Thus in the text, they would not consider, nor understand, nor know, nor contemplate

לדון intellexit cognovit contemplatum est. Hinc Maschil, carmen eruditens ode didascalica, Tit: Psal: 32.

any of his wayes.

The Hebrew is, *all his wayes*; that is, none at all of them. The wayes of God in Scripture are taken in a two-fold notion; First, for those wherein he would have us walk; such are the wayes of his commandements: they are called the wayes of God, because he directs us to walke in them. A holy life consists in our walking with God, and we cannot walke with God any further, or any longer, then we keep in the wayes of his commandements. It is sayd of the children of *Israel*, after the death of *Joshua* (*Judg: 2. 17.*) *they turned quickly out of the way, which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandements of the Lord; but they did not so.* To obey the commandements, is to walke in the way of them. Taking the wayes of God in this sence, when *Elihu* saith, *They would not consider any of his wayes*, his meaning is, they did not intend nor had any heart to set themselves to learne the mind of God revealed in his word concerning their duty, or what they ought to doe; they know not the wayes of God practically. The word properly denotes the wisdom and prudence, which stayeth not in notion, but proceeds to action. These men lived as if they

ad prudentiam & sapientiam practica rerum agendarum pertinet. had never heard of, at least never understood the Law of God, which is the rule of life. They considered not the wayes of God to walke in them; as *Moses* exhorted the people of *Israel* (*Deut.* 29. 9.) *Keep therefore the words of this covenant to doe them.*

Secondly, The wayes of God are those wherein himself walketh, the works of God are the wayes of God; the works of his providence either in mercy or in judgement, either in doing good or in doing evil (that is, pœnal evil) these are the wayes of God; in these God shewes himself as in a way, in these he goeth forth in his power and goodness, in his mercy and justice. All these divine glories and perfections are discovered in the works of God. Thus *David* is to be understood when he saith. (*Psal.* 25. 10.) *All the wayes of God are mercy and truth, to them that fear him, and keep his Covenant;* that is, all the providential works of God are mercy and truth; though all of them are not mercy in the matter, or precisely taken as works done, though none of them are mercy, respecting some persons to whom they are done, for many of them are materially chastisements, afflictions, and crosses to good men, and all of them are wrath and judgement to evil and impenitently wicked men; yet they are all mercy in the issue or result of them to good men; or to those who fear God, and keep his covenants. For whether he do good, or whether he do evil, whether he wounds, or whether he heals, all these providential wayes of God, are as truth in themselves, so mercy to his people; or, as the Apostle concludes (*Rom.* 8. 28.) *They work together for good to them that love God, and are the called according to his purpose.* In both these senses we may expound this Text, *They would not consider any of his wayes;* that is, they would neither consider the Lawes of God, which were the way wherein they should walk towards him, nor would they consider the works of God, which are the wayes wherein himself walketh towards them. This was the spirit of that evil generation intended in this Scripture; they had not much understanding in, and less consideration of the wayes of God.

Hence, first we may take notice, *Elihu* doth not say, *they did not consider his wayes;* but, *they would not;* It was not so much an act of carelessness and negligence as of contempt and rebellious resolution.

Hence Observe.

Evil men have no will to consider or understand the good wayes of God ; yea, their will is against such an understanding.

A natural man *liketh not to retain God in his knowledge*, (Rom. 1. 28.) Now, he that doth not like to retain God in his knowledge, or had rather think of any thing then of God, he can never (while such) like to retain the wayes of God in his knowledge; he that layeth God out of his thoughts, will much more lay the law of God out of his thoughts. The natural man hath not only a blindness in his minde, which hinders him from discerning the things of God, (they being discernable only by a spiritual eye) but he hath an obstinacy in his Will; or, he hath not only an inability to know, but an enmity against the knowledge of that which is spiritual: He shuts his eyes, and draws a curtain between himself and the light which is ready to dart in upon him; *away with this light*, saith he; Thus he rebelleth against the light, and as his understanding is dark, so his affections are corrupt. Solomon gives us all this in the expostulations of wisdom with wicked men, (Prov. 1. 20, 21, 22.) *Wisdom cryeth, &c. How long ye simple ones will ye love simplicity, and the scorers delight in their scorning, and fools hate knowledge?* That which a man hateth, he hath no will, no minde to know. An impotency or inability unto God; argues a very sad condition, but a rebellion, a frowardness, a wilfulness against it, demonstrates a condition much more sad; not to know because we have no means of knowledge, will make us miserable enough, but not to know because unwilling to receive, or because wilfully set against the means of knowledge, renders any mans condition most miserable. Such were these in the Text, *They would not consider any of his wayes.*

Secondly, *Elihu saith not, they did not know any of his wayes*; or they knew not which way to go; but they would not consider them. There is no man but knowes some, yea many of the ways of God, that is, of those wayes wherein God would have him to walk; these wayes of God are written in the heart by nature, there is an impression of the Will of God upon every soul, though not such an impression or writing as grace maketh there (that's another kinde or manner of work) for, when once through grace the Law of God is written in, and impressed upon the heart, then the heart

heart is suited to the Law, yea, the heart is not only conformed unto, but transformed into the Law of God, whereas by nature the Law is written only so far as to give us the knowledge of the Law, and a conviction of that duty or conformity which we owe to it. The men here intended by *Elihu*, knew the Law or wayes of God, by the light of a natural conscience, but not by the light of a renewed conscience, and therefore they *would not consider any of his wayes*, which is a farther description of the heart of man in a state of Nature.

Hence Note.

That which a natural man knoweth of the will of God, he will not consider, unless it be to reject and turn from it.

I (saith Wisdome, *Prov. 1. 24, 25.*) *have stretched out my hand, (as a Teacher doth to his hearers or disciples) and no man, (that is, no meer natural man) regarded, they set at nought my counsel, and would none of my reproof.* Let me say what I would, they would at most but give me the hearing, they would not consider it; though the light shined in upon them, and they could not chuse but see something, yet they would not sit down and rowl it in their thoughts, and work it upon their hearts, to finde out the excellency of what they saw. It is a very great measure of sinfulness not to know the wayes of God, but not to consider what we know, but lightly to pass it by, that is a greater measure of sinfulness.

Thirdly, comparing this assertion concerning wicked men, *they would not consider any of his wayes*, with their practice in the former part of the verse, *they turned back from God*, and with the effect of it in the verse following, *they made the cry of the poor to come up to him, &c.*

Observe.

The reason why men are so wicked, and act so wickedly, is, because they minde not the Word of God.

They who consider not the rule of the Word, are far both from righteousness towards man, and holiness towards God. If once a man throw aside the Word of God, where will he stay? He will neither abide in any wayes of holiness, nor will he abide in any wayes of righteousness; they cannot make conscience of the wayes of God, who will not consider the wayes of God. We have this clear character of a wicked man, (*Psal. 50.*) he is one that will possibly

possibly take the covenant of God in his mouth, he will be talking of it, his tongue may be tipt with it, but (*vers. 17.*) *he hateth instruction, and casteth the words of God behinde his back.* He that would consider a thing, holds it before his eye, and keeps it, as much as he can in sight; therefore the Lord, when he would assure Zion how much he did consider her case, though she had said a little before, *God hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me,* yet presently the Lord saith, (*Isa. 49. 15, 16.*) *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may, yet will not I forget thee;* (what follows?) *Behold I have graven thee upon the Palms of my hands, thy walls are continually before me.* As if the Lord had said, you may be sure I will consider your case, for I have you here portrayed upon the palms of my hands, and am alwayes viewing your walls, either as ruin'd and demolished, to move me to pity, or in that strong & beautiful model according to which I purpose to raise them up again, or re-build them. Thus I say, both God and man intending to consider any thing, have it alwayes before them; but what a man hath no minde to consider, he casts it behinde his back; *thou castest my words behinde thy back,* saith God to the hypocrite, and when once the hypocrite hath got the word behinde him, then he is ready for any wickedness (*vers. 18, 19, 20.*) *When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst with him, and hast been partaker with the adulterer, &c.* Whence was all this? he had cast the word behinde his back. It is *David's* question, (*Psal. 119. 6.*) *Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way?* The answer is, *By taking heed thereto according to thy word;* that is, by continual eying of the word, and of his way, and by comparing them together. They that will make right work, must be alwayes eying the rule; if once you lay by the rule, you will make but crooked, or bungling work: When the rule of righteousness is laid by, righteousness is laid by too. These mighty men of whom *Elihu* speaketh would not consider any the holy wayes of God, and you see what ill favour'd work they made, what foul wayes they walked in.

Fourthly, The Text doth not say they would not consider some, or such and such of his wayes, but *any of his wayes.*

Hence Note.

A wicked man liketh, delighteth in, or loveth no one way of God better or more then another. He

He is as much out with all as with any, they are all alike to him, that is, he likes none of them; *they would not consider any of his wayes.* He that hateth one truth of God, hateth all truth, though poſſibly his hatred is not called out or acted againſt ſome truths; and he that hateth one law of God, hateth all his laws, though poſſibly his luſts are not drawn out againſt ſome of them. The reaſon why the Apoſtle James ſaith, (*chap. 2. 10.*) *Whoſoever ſhall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all,* is, becauſe if a man hath a minde to ſin againſt one branch of the law, that evil principle will carry him to ſin againſt any branch of it: If he be not ſtopt from without, he findes no ſtop within againſt the worſt of ſins, as it is a ſin.

Fifthly, We tranſlate *any*, the Original word is [*all*] his wayes, which imports a reſuſing of every one of his wayes; there are ſeveral Scriptures of a like ſence (*Pſal. 103. 1, 2.*) *O praife the Lord, and forget not all his benefits*; that is, forget not any one of his benefits; not that a man ſhall be excuſed, though he forget many of the benefits of God, or half his benefits, if ſo be he forget not all, or remember ſome: but when that Scripture ſaith, *forget not all his benefits*, the meaning is, forget not any one at all. Thus here, *they conſidered not all his wayes*, (that's the letter of the Text, and ſo Mr Broughton tranſlates,) that is, none of them. Taking that reading, and the Scripture ſence given of it, it gives us this uſeful Obſervation.

That unleſs all the wayes of God be conſidered and obeyed, there is not any one of them conſidered or obeyed.

God will not be obeyed by halves; he muſt have entire obedience, univerſal obedience, or he owneth none; there is a band or tie between all the commandments of God, and unleſs you keep them all, you break them all; they that ſubmit not to all, ſubmit to none of his laws. It is not enough for a man to ſay he is no adulterer, if he be a thief; or to ſay he is not a murderer, if he bears falſe witneſs. He that doth the one in act, doth the other in his heart; nothing hinders him but the abſence of a temptation, or of an opportunity, the Law doth not.

Further, [*they*] *would not conſider any of his wayes.* Who were they? No fools I dare ſay, either in their own opinion, or in the opinion of men. Doubtleſs thoſe mighty men ſpoken of by Elihu,

hu, were worldly wise men ; they were the mighty, the great men of the world, and they are commonly very considering men, as well as very considerable men ; they are knowing men, as well as men much known ; they are men of counsel, and sit in council to debate difficult matters, and of greatest outward concernment ; these things they could consider exactly, and weigh them to a grain ; but they would not consider any of God's wayes.

Hence Note.

There is nothing so little regarded by ungodly men, as the wayes of God are.

Though they have wisdom and ability to understand and consider earthly things, yet they will bestow none of it upon the things of heaven. Christ rebuked *Martha* when he saw her so busie about worldly business, (*Luke 10. 41.*) *Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things, one thing is needful ; Martha* had some care about the one thing needful, but because not so much as she should, Christ gave her a gracious check and reproof for it : How much more may Christ come and rebuke the men of the world, ye are careful about many things, ye are wise considering men about your profits and preferments, those ye can think of all night long ; but there is one thing needful, my wayes, my word, my commandments are to be considered, what account can ye give of or concerning them ?

Farther, this *non-consideration* of the wayes of God is brought as a charge, as a high charge against those mighty men ; not only were they bad men who did not consider the wayes of God, but this was a part, yea I may say the whole of their badness, that they did not consider the wayes of God.

Hence Note.

Not to consider the wayes of God, is in it self a very great sin.

The omission, or non-performance of what is good, is as sinful as the commission or doing of that which is evil. Not to do good is to do evil ; especially when it is the not doing of such a good duty as opens a way to the doing of all evil. Should we suppose a man not chargeable with the breaking of any commandment of God, yet if we could charge him that he did not consider the commandments of God, this were the breaking of all the com-

mandments. For as they are all to be considered that we may keep them, so if we consider them not, we cannot keep them. 'Tis the description of a godly man, (*Psal. 1. 2.*) *His delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate day and night.* Meditation is nothing else but consideration. A godly man meditates or considers day and night what the Law or Word of God is; not that he thinks of nothing else but the Law of God day and night, for then he must throw off his Calling; but the meaning is this, he is very sedulous and watchful of all opportunities both night and day, to get and keep his heart up in holy meditation; and why is he so much in holy meditation? 'Tis surely, that he may be much, yea alwayes in holy action; and when it may be said of a man, that his meditation is not in the Law of God, neither day nor night, or that he never considers the wayes of God, this is an undeniable evidence that he neither keeps in the way, or observes any one line or letter of the Law at any time. It is our sin, and that no small one, not to consider our own wayes, how much more is it sinful not to consider the wayes of God! To consider our own wayes, is a great part of our work: If we consider not our own wayes, they will soon be crooked wayes. The Prophet adviseth the Jewes, (*Hag. 1. 5.*) *Consider your wayes*; the Text is, *Set your heart upon your wayes*; that is, ponder your wayes; as if he had said, the reason why your feet are so often in bad wayes, is, because your hearts are so seldom upon your wayes. Now, if not to consider our own wayes be so sinful, and subjects us to every sin, then much more is it sinful not to consider the wayes, the word and truths of God, and much more doth the neglect of this lead or lay us open and obnoxious to every sin. This neglect is not only a special sin in it self, and an effect of sin, but the general cause of all other sins: What sin is not, or may not be found in the wayes of those men, who consider not the wayes of God?

Lastly Observe.

Sin makes men stupid, and transforms them into fools.

He that is not a considering man, is a weak and a foolish man; every wise man is a considering man; and the more a man is versed in consideration, the more wise he is, and the wiser he grows. The wicked man is often called a fool in Scripture, and he deserves

serves no better a title; when he is called so, he is both served and called in his kinde (*Psal. 14. 1.*) *The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.* The thoughts of the heart are the sayings of the heart; and sin hath made a wicked man so much a fool, that as he knowes not how to say any thing of God, which is honourable, with his tongue, so all that his heart can say, that is, think of God, is, that God is not; which as it is the highest blasphemy, so the deepest piece of folly and irrationallity that ever was hatcht in the heart of man. Sin makes dull-heads, it stupifies the soul; sinners consider not that, at any time, which is their interest as much as their duty to consider of at all times, the wayes of God, as taken for the wayes wherein man ought to walk towards God.

Again, If we take the wayes of God in the second notion, for the wayes wherein himself walks towards man, usually called his works, or the wayes of his providence.

Note.

It is the mark of an ungodly man, not to consider the works and providences of God, how God walketh towards him, or what he doth in the world.

(*Isa. 1. 3.*) *I have nourished and brought up children;* that is, I have done for my people as a father for his children; but what follows? *My people doth not know, Israel doth not consider.* They consider not what I have done for them, as well as not what I have spoken to them; they consider not how I have nourished and brought them up, as well as not how I have instructed and given them counsel; and from this neglect God infers, (*vers. 4.*) *Alb sinful Nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, &c.* they quickly proceed to the doing of all evil against God, who consider not of the good which God doth or hath done to them. Read this sin, the not considering of the works of God, with the sinfulness of all the works of those unconsidering men, (*Psal. 28. 4, 5.* *Isa. 5. 11, 12.*) The Scripture makes frequent mention how extremely ill the Lord takes it at the hands of men, when his works are not considered by them, when they regard not the operation of his hands. Indeed God doth much in the world, he walketh in many dark and hidden wayes; which though we consider, we cannot fully understand; *Thy way.* (saith *Asaph, Psal. 77. 19.*) *is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy foot-steps are not known.*

Y y y 2

God

God hath many invisible works both of mercy and of judgement ; yet we should be, though not curiously , yet seriously searching, *Arcana imperii.* as much as possibly we can, even into those wayes of God which are unsearchable ; we should consider, though we cannot search them out. But as for those works of God that are visible and plain, which are written as it were with the beams of the Sun, which are so plain and obvious, that he who runs may read them, to neglect the consideration of these, or lightly to pass them by, how sinful is it ! Those works of God which are most plain, have wonders in them , if we could finde them out. As in the plainest Text of Scripture there is a world of holiness and spiritualness ; and if we in prayer and dependance upon God did sit down and consider it, we might behold much more of those wonders then yet appear to us : It may be at once reading or looking we see little or nothing, as *Elijah's* servant, when he went once, he saw nothing, therefore he was commanded to look seven times ; What now, saith the Prophet ? O now I see a cloud rising *like a mans hand* ; and by and by the whole surface of the heavens was covered with clouds. So you may look lightly upon a Scripture, and see nothing, and look again, and see little, but look seven times upon it, meditate often upon it, and then you shall see a light like the light of the Sun. 'Tis thus also with the works of God, we pass many of them by as small matters, but when thoroughly considered, there is a wonderful depth in them ; now not to consider those wayes of God wherein he is so visible, and which are the actings and exercising of his power, goodness, wisdom, and faithfulness, this must needs be a very great sin, (*Isa. 26. 11.*) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see,* (they take no notice of it, much less lay it to heart) *but they shall see,* (they shall be made to see one way or other,) *and be ashamed for their envie at the people,* or (as the margin hath it,) *towards thy people.* As godly men see the hand of God, and are both confirmed and comforted for his mercy to his people, so wicked men shall see, and be both ashamed and confounded, because they both envied the people of God that mercy, and opposed it. They who will not see the works of God to give him glory, shall see them to their own shame. God hath given us his works of Creation, that we should consider them daylie, as *David* did (*Psal. 8. 3.*) *When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the Moon, and the Stars which*
thou

thou hast ordained; What is man! &c. How was the Psalmist ravish'd with that contemplation? And so may we, while we consider the works of Providence, whether works of judgement, or works of mercy; whether vengeance upon the wicked, or deliverance for the godly.

Let us therefore set our selves to this soul-ravishing, and God-exalting work, the consideration of the works of God: And we are the more engaged to do it, because God hath fitted man, among all creatures in this lower world, (and he hath only fitted man) to give him glory by considering his works. The beasts of the earth cannot glorifie God by considering his works: 'tis true, both they, & the fowls of the ayre, with the fish of the sea, according to their kinde, praise God; but man only is fitted and furnished with an intellect or understanding faculty to consider, and so to draw out from all the works of God, those peculiar excellencies which make his Name glorious: Now, for man to leave such a faculty unexercis'd (and unacted), (as they who consider not the works of God do) is not only a dishonour to God, but a degradation of himself. *As it is the priviledge and happiness of a man to enjoy the benefit of the works of God, so it is his holiness and his duty to consider the beauty of them.* And to all who brutishly lay by the works of God without consideration, let me adde this consideration; God considers all your works or wayes, and will not you consider the works, the wayes of God! Of this be sure, whether you consider the wayes of God, his *Word-wayes*, or *Work-wayes* (of this be sure) God will consider your wayes, certainly he will; those wayes of yours which in themselves are not worth the considering or looking upon; your sinful wayes, though they are so vile, so abominable, that if your selves did but look upon them and consider them, you would be utterly ashamed of them; yea though they are an abomination to God while he beholds them, yet he will behold and consider them. The Lord who is of purer eyes then to behold any the least iniquity, to approve it, will yet behold the greatest of your iniquities, and your impurest wayes to consider them. Thou (saith David, Psal. 10. 14.) *Thou beholdest mischief and spite, to require it*: God beholdeth the foulest dirtiest wayes of men, their wayes of oppression and unrighteousness, their wayes of intemperance and lasciviousness; their wayes of wrath and maliciousness, at once to detest, detest

and requite them. If the Lord thus considereth the wayes of men, even these filthy and crooked wayes of men; should not men consider the holy the just and righteous wayes of God? And that God considers all the wayes, the worst of wayes of the sons men appeares further in the next verse.

Vers. 28. *So that they cause the cry of the poore to come up to him, and he heareth the cry of the afflicted.*

If the wayes of men come up to God, then surely God considers the wayes of men, even their vile and base wayes, their wicked and unworthy wayes; how can he but consider those wayes, the cry of which cometh up to him?

So that they cause the cry of the poore to come up to him.

*Effectum hujus
malitia affe-
ctus ostendit.
Aquin:*

Here *Elihu* expounds to us or gives us more particularly what those wayes of God were which those men would not consider, as also what the sin of those mighty ones was, which provoked God, *to strike them as wicked men in the open sight of others*. The wayes of God which they would not consider, were the wayes of his righteousness and justice, of his compassion to and care for the poore, they went quite crosse to those wayes of God. *For they caused the cry of the poore to come up to him*. But doe ungodly men bring the cry of the poore up to God? Certainly they have no such purpose, and therefore those words.

So that they cause the cry of the poore to come up unto him,

Note only a consequent; of what those men did, not the intent of those men; they aymed at no such thing by their oppressing the poore, as that God should heare the cry of the poore, yea they hoped the cry of the poore should never come up to God. They would willingly have stopt the mouthes of the poore, that they should not have cryed to God, and presumed the eares of God would be stopt against their cry, let them cry as long as they would: they doe not say to the poore, goe and appeale to God, goe make your moane to God; (yet some have been thus impudently blasphemous, when they have opprest the poore, to bid them, goe cry to their God) but here we are to understand it as the issue of the oppression, not as the desire of the oppressors. Their cruel and unrighteous dealing with the poore (like that of

Pharaoh

Pharaoh with the Israelites) caused the cry of the poore to come up unto him.

Further, Some render the text, not as expressing (though supposing) the cry of the poore coming up to God, but as reflecting or turning back in sad effects upon their oppressors; *So that they cause the cry of the poore to come upon him*; that is, upon every one of them, meaning the wicked themselves; they cause the cry of the poore to come upon them, or pull downe vengeance upon their owne heads. Severall learned Interpreters give that reading, taking the relative *Him* as a singular put for a plurall distributively, *upon him*, that is, upon every one of them; taking also *the cry of the poore* by a metonymie of the effect, for that punishment which they deserved by their oppression, who caused the poore to cry. As if he had sayd; *By this their wickedness they draw downe the wrath of God upon themselves.*

Inducendo super eorum quemq; clamorem tenuit, quum clamorem pauperum exaudivit. Jun:

But I shall only pursue our reading, and give the sense accordingly. *They cause the cry of the poore to come unto [him]* that is, unto God. The cry of the poore is their mournfull cry, their pittifull lamenting cry; yet this cry may possibly be, not so much vocall as reall, not so much what the poore did make formally or directly to God about their wrongs, but the very wrongs and evils which they suffered cryed to the righteous Judge of all the earth. Their affliction had a cry, a voyce, a tongue, a thousand tongues in it. *They cause the cry*

of the poore.

The word properly signifieth those who are exhausted and drawne dry; oppressors will squeeze and suck such as they get into their power, till they have drawne out every drop; they will empty them from vessel to vessel, till they become empty vessels, and then like empty vessels the poore sound most and make the greatest cry. When oppressors have got all the money out of the purses of the poore, when they have pull'd the bread out of their mouthes, and even drawne the blood out of their veines, then they (poore soules!) sound out and send up their cries to purpose. *So that they cause the cry of the poore to come up unto him.*

Hence note.

First, *One sin makes way for another!*

Turning,

Turning back from God, brings in the non-consideration of the word and works of God ; The word and works of God , not being considered, brings in the workes of unrighteousnesse towards men, or oppression of the poore. One sin given way to, makes way for many more. No man knows where he shall end in doing evill, when once he begins to doe evill. *David* having defiled the wife is led to the murder of her husband. *Peter* having first disowned or denyed his Master, proceeded to forswear him. If good men are thus hurried from sin to sin before they come to repentance, whether will sin carry wicked men, who goe onne and onne impenitently ?

Secondly , Note.

They are the worst sort of wicked who make poore men cry.

Oppression is a sin against the light and law of nature, as well as against the light and law of God ; every sin is the more sinfull, by how much it is committed against more light of any kinde, or against more kindes of light ; And those sins are extreemly high, which are committed against the lowest and most common light, that of Nature. They who sin against the light of grace , against the light of the Spirit, sin (as the Prophet speakes, *Hos. 6. 7.*) *like men*, but they who sin against the light of nature, sin as if they were not so much as men but very beasts , yea worse then many beasts, there being scarce any of them who (as oppressors doe) devoure those of their owne kind, though of some of them it be sayd and experienced (especially of the fishes in the Sea) that the Greater devoure the lesse, as the mighty men of whom *Elihu* spake did the poore, *causing their cry to come up unto God.*

Thirdly ; Note.

Oppression will quickly cause a Cry.

(*Isa. 5. 7.*) *I looked for Judgement, but behold oppression, and for righteousness, and behold a cry ;* that is, the cry of the oppressed. As the act of oppression is a crying sin, so the effect of it is crying ; Oppression cryeth loud, though the oppressed shut their mouthes in silence and say nothing, yet usually the oppressed cannot forbear crying. The Apostle *James* (Chap. 5. 3.) schooles the wicked rich men of the world, with, *a Go to now weepe and howle, &c. Your riches are corrupt, and your garments moth-eaten ; Behold*

Behold the hire of the labourers which have reaped downe your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth, and the crys of them which have reaped are entred into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. As the poore labourers cryed, so their hire that was detained cryed also. The loud cry both of the oppressed and of oppression is often reported and recorded in Scripture, read (*Exod: 2. 23. Lam: 1. 17. Chap: 2. 18. Psal: 86. 14.*) The oppressed who cry are in a sad condition, but the condition of oppressors who make the poor cry is much more sad; For, as the text hath it,

The cry of the poore cometh up to God.

Though God should not come downe to that, yet that cometh up to God. And when it is sayd the cry cometh up to him, and not he at the cry. This intimates the cry of oppression, a very loud cry, that's a loud cry that ascends up to heaven; *Cities walled up to heaven*, are high-walled Cities, and cries reaching up to heaven, are high-strained cries. The breach of a commandement makes a great crack, especially when it is such a breach as makes the poore cry too. If a Great house, or a Tower fall suddenly, what a noyse doth it make? Certainly the unjust pulling downe of any poore man, is like the fall of a great house, or of a tower, it makes a noyse that reacheth up to heaven; he doth not speak of Gods coming downe. When Cain had slaine his brother Abel, the Lord sayd (*Gen: 4. 10.*) *The voyce of thy brothers blood cryeth unto me from the ground*; and so the cry of Sodom came up to God, (*Gen: 18. 21.*) The fall of a poore man makes a report as farre as heaven. Among men the fall of Princes and mighty men, makes a huge noyse, all the world is filled with the fall of a Prince, 'tis told every where, A great Prince is fallen. But I tell you the fall of a poore godly man, of the meanest of the servants of God, makes a greater cry then the fall of the greatest Prince in the world who is not so. The fall of a poore man by the oppression of the wicked, possibly is not heard a mile from the place where it was done on earth, yet it reacheth up to heaven; oppression hath not only a voyce, but a very loud voyce. To wrong a rich man, who can beare the wrong and be a rich man still, is a sin which hath a voyce in it; but the sin which the Scripture saith hath a cry in it, is the oppressing of a poore man. There is no liberty given to wrong a rich man, and that would be considered; Some

take a kinde of liberty, if he be a rich man that they are to put a reckoning upon, they thinke they may doe it ſomewhat largely, and ſay, *he is able to beare it.* But be the man never ſo rich and able to beare it, yet to wrong him is a ſin, and a ſin that God will take notice of to puniſh. And though he can beare the wrong done, yet the wrong-doer will hardly be able to beare it when he comes to reckon with God for it. Thus (I ſay) to wrong the rich offends God ; but to wrong the poore cryeth to God ; and as it followeth in the text.

He heareth the cry of the afflicted.

Many cries come up to God which he doth not heare, he doth not regard them, and 'tis poſſible for a poore man to cry to God and God not heare him, in the ſence here ſpoken of ; Some poore men cry (as we ſay) before they are hurt ; they cry rather out of diſcontent then want, they cry becauſe they have not what they deſire, not becauſe they have not what they need. God will not heare the cry of ſuch, though poore : but when a poore man is afflicted, when a poore man that is humbled (as the word here ſignifies) and layd low in his ſtate, is low alſo in ſpirit, and lowly in minde, God heareth the cry of ſuch a poore man. If a poore man have a proud ſpirit, or is humorous, God will not heare him, though he cry. The word here rendred, *afflicted*, ſignifies not only a man deſtitute of helpe, of ſtrength, of friends, of aſſiſtance, (ſuch is the reach and ſtrength of that word) but he is one of a ſubmitting patient ſpirit, or it noteth a man not only firſt, unable to reſiſt his oppreſſor, but, ſecondly, unwilling at leaſt not forward to make reſiſtance, but ſitting downe by the loſſe quietly, or poſſeſſing his ſoule in patience when he hath loſt all that he poſſeſſed by oppreſſion. The Lord hears the cry of this afflicted man ; he will not reject his cry, nor ſtop his ears againſt it. And when *Elihu* ſaith, *He heareth the cry of the afflicted*, his meaning is, he yeilds or grants him the thing he cries for.

Hence note.

Firſt, *God graiouſly heares the cry of humble oppreſſed ones.*

Whoſoever cry to him upon juſt cauſe, being indeed oppreſſed, though they are not godly, yet God will take notice of their cry ; for he will right the oppreſſed as oppreſſed, and therefore the *Jewes* had thoſe cautions (*Exod.* 22. 23. *Dent.* 24. 15.) not

וְיִשְׁׁוּ inopes
ideſt, deſtituti
ope, nec valen-
tes reſiſtere,
ſed malum poti-
us tolerantes et
ſubjicientes ſe
dei. Coc:

to wrong any servant or stranger, let him be who or whence he would, *lest he cry to me* (saith God) *and it be sin to thee.* But when any are not only oppressed and suffer wrong, but are also godly, of humble and lowly spirits, they are heard much more; when it is not only a cry of nature, but a cry of grace; not only a complaining cry, but a praying cry, God will certainly hear, (*Luke 18. 12.*) *Shall not God avenge his own elect that cry to him day and night?* when it is not only a complaining cry that they are under oppression, but a believing cry to be, or that they shall be delivered from oppression; when it is a holy cry, the cry of the elect, God cannot but hear their cry. He heareth other cries, he heareth the cry of the Ravens when they call upon him, and provides for them; much more will he hear the cry of Saints, the cry of believers, the cry of the humbled and humble.

Secondly, as hearing notes granting,

Observe.

The cry of the oppressed brings vengeance upon oppressors.

Read *Psal. 12. 6. Eccles. 10. 26. Isa. 33. 1. Jer. 22. 16.* All these Scriptures teach this truth, that the cry of the oppressed brings vengeance on oppressors: Let the mighty remember, *'Tis dangerous meddling with Gods poor;* 'tis dangerous meddling with any poor, but most dangerous meddling with Gods poor. Some will say, there is such a great man, it is dangerous meddling with him, and they are afraid to wrong him, they dare not do it; if ever (say they) he should come to know it, he may break our backs, sit on our skirts, and crush us with his power; but if they can get an underling, a man below them, they presume there is no great danger in oppressing him; what can he do? if he bark, he cannot bite; if he hath a tongue, he hath no teeth; we can deal with him well enough. Thus, I say, men think it dangerous to wrong great men, but conclude they may do what they please with the poor, and those that are underlings; but we should more fear to wrong a poor man, then to wrong a rich man, though we ought not to do either; yet, I say, we should more fear to wrong the poor, then the rich, because the poor are under the special protection of the great God; they are under more promises of protection then the great men of the world are. Therefore *Solomon* gives that serious caution, (*Prov. 23. 10, 11.*) *Enter not into the*

Vineyard of the fatherless; (do not oppress the poor fatherless,) *for his avenger is mighty, and God will plead his cause for him.* You think you may do any thing with the poor and fatherless; O faith wife *Solomon*, take heed, do not invade the heritage of the fatherless, (we are not to take the fatherless there in a strict sence, for those whose parents are dead, but any that are poor and low, are fatherless, as the Prophet calls them *Hos. 14. 3.*) *In thee the fatherless findeth mercy*; beware saith he how you deal with the fatherless, *for his Redeemer is mighty*: though he hath no might, yet he hath a mighty Redeemer, and he will plead his cause for him. Possibly the poor man cannot plead with thee, he cannot try it out with thee in Law, he cannot see an Advocate, but God can and will be his Advocate. Therefore you that dare not wrong the mighty for fear they should crush you, be much more afraid to wrong the poor, for God is their avenger, and how easily can he crush you?

Lastly, This is matter of comfort to the godly poor, to the humble and meek; they may look for help from God in all their afflictions and hard usages they meet with in this world from the hands of men; when men even eat them up as bread, and ride over their heads as if they were but dirt, they may appeal to heaven and there have audience; they may refer their cause to God and be righted; *He that is their Redeemer is mighty, and he will plead their cause*; *The expectations of the poor shall not perish for ever*, (*Psal. 9. 18.*) that is, it shall never perish.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 29.

When he giveth quietness, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a Nation, or against a man only.

THis verse is an argument or proof of what *Elihu* affirmed in the former, that, *God heareth the cry of the poor*: He doubtless heareth the cry of the poor, when he stops or takes away the cry of the poor, when he sets the poor in a quiet state, or settles them in peace, in such a peace, as their proud and wrathful oppressors shall not be able to disturb. Thus the Lord dealeth graciously in reference both to persons, and Nations, that cry unto him; and that's an undeniable argument, that he heareth their cry, the cry of distressed persons, the cry of distressed Nations.

Vers. 29. *When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a Nation, or against a man only.*

The first part of the sentence, rendered, *when he giveth quietness*, is but one word in the Hebrew, we had it before (chap. 3. 13.) where *Job* supposeth if he had died in his infancy, then should he have been still, and been quiet, he should have slept, and been at rest. The grave is a silent and quiet abiding place, the dead are quitted of all worldly unquietness. And at the 26th verse of the same chapter, *Job* saith, *I was not in safety, neither was I quiet*: (that is, secure) yet trouble came. So then, as this word notes, the quietness of the dead who have no sense of trouble, so it notes such a quietness of the living as hath no fear of trouble. *When he giveth quietness*, or as Master Broughton translates, *when he maketh rest, who &c.* The Italian version is, *if he sendeth home in peace, &c.* As if it had been said, *If he by his soveraigne sentence freeth out of slavery and oppression, as he did the children of Israel out of the bondage of Egypt &c. If he commandeth rest and quiet, then, as it followeth;*

*upw quiete
in Hipbit, qui-
escere fecit.*

Who

Who can make trouble?

Or, as Master Broughton renders, *who can disturb?* Who can disquiet those to whom God gives ease, or oppress those to whom God gives protection? The words bear the signification of a divine challenge, like that, (*Rom. 8. 31.*) *If God be for us, who can be against us?* or like that (*vers. 34.*) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect?* Let us see the man, or the devil, that can charge the elect and prevail. Such is the Emphasis of the present Text, *When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?* Where is the man, high or low, great or small that can do it?

Further, the word which we translate *make trouble*, hath a three-fold eminent signification in Scripture.

First, It signifieth to *be wicked*, or to do wickedly; thus we read it at the 12th verse of this chapter, *Surely God will not do wickedly.* He that is altogether holy and righteous, doth all things holily and righteously. The same word signifieth to do wickedly, and to make trouble, because to do wickedly bringeth trouble often upon others, alwayes upon the doers.

Secondly, it signifieth to *condemn*; thus we translate, at the 17th verse of this chapter, *Wilt thou condemn him* (as one that hath done wickedly) *who is most just?* The same word may well signify to do wickedly, and to condemn, because they who do so, are worthy to be condemned. In this sense also we translate it, in that famous Prophecie of Christ, (*Isa. 50. 9.*) *He is near that justifieth me, who shall condemn me?* or make me wicked and unrighteous. Thus some render the minde of *Elihu* in this place, *If he giveth peace or quietness, who can condemn?*

Thirdly, The word signifieth, as we render, to *trouble*, molest, or vex; so we translate (*1 Sam. 14. 47.*) where 'tis said of *Saul*, that he fought against all his enemies on every side, against *Moab*, and against the children of *Ammon*, and against *Edom*, and against the Kings of *Zobah*, and against the *Philistines*; and whither soever he turned himself, he vexed, or troubled them. The word may be taken in these three significations with a subserviency one to another; for he that is wicked, or doth wickedly, deserveth to be condemned, or, men are condemned because they do wickedly: and he that is condemned by a righteous sentence is punished, and cannot but be troubled; a legal sentence of condemnation, brings a legal

penalty

Ipso enim concedente pacem, quis est qui condemnat.
Vulg.

penalty upon the person condemned; we translate clearly to the sence of the Text, *who can make trouble*, when God giveth quietness? for here the word is not opposed to well doing, or acquitting, but to quietting and pacifying; *when he giveth quietness, who can make trouble?*

And when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?

The face of God, by a well known Hebraisme (very frequent in Scripture) signifieth the favour of God; Master Broughton reads, *when he hideth favour*. The favour which we bear to others, is most visible in the face, and therefore the face may well signifie favour. David over-looking all the good things of this world, prayed for a good look from God in this expression, (*Psal. 4. 6.*) *There be many that say who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance (or of thy face) upon us*: that is, shew us favour, or be favourable to us. And as the greatest good of Saints in this world, so all the good of the next world is comprehended in this one word (*Psal. 16. 11.*) *In thy presence* (the text is, *in thy face*, that is, in the full enjoyment of thy benigne and gracious presence) *is fulness of joy*. In like sense the word is used *Psal. 21. 6. Psal. 67. 1.* So then, *to hide the face*, is to withdraw favour, and kindness, love, and respect; more distinctly, this phrase of *hiding the face*, hath a three-fold importance, or may hold out these three things.

First, a distaste either against persons or things; we turn away our face from him, or that which we do not like, or is displeasing to us. The hiding of Gods face is a manifestation of his displeasure; *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment*, saith God to the Church, (*Isa. 54. 8.*) This form of speaking is borrowed from their usage or practice, who refuse to admit into their presence, or so much as look upon such, whom they either really hate, or would seem at least to be much displeased with; As David gave command concerning Absalom (*2 Sam. 14. 24.*) *Let him turn to his own house, and let him not see my face*. When God withdraweth the wonted expressions of his love and kindness from a person or a people; then, (according to Scripture sense and language, he is said to *hide his face* from them, *Deut. 30. 20. Psal. 30. 7.*)

Secondly, The hiding of Gods face, notes a refusal to help those

those who in straits cry to him for relief and deliverance : For if we will not give a man our eye, we will hardly give him our hand ; if we will not so much as look upon him, we will hardly assist him. When God hides his face, 'tis as much as his denial of succour ; Thus *David* bemoaned himself, (*Psal.* 13. 1.) *Why hidest thou thy face ?* that is, Lord, why withdrawest thou thy help from me ? That he was sensible of such *withdrawals*, is plain by the prayer which he made, (*vers.* 3.) *Consider, and hear me, O Lord my God ;* and by the reason of it given (*vers.* 4.) *Lest mine enemies say, I have prevailed against him.* We finde *David* deprecating the hiding of Gods face upon the same ground, (*Psal.* 44. 24. *Psal.* 69. 17.) The Prophet is very expresse in this point, (*Isa.* 59. 1, 2.) *The Lords hand is not shortned that it cannot save, neither his ear heavie that it cannot hear ; but your iniquities have separated between you, and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear :* that is, as he distasteth, and is displeased with you, so he denyeth you his usual help and assistance, because ye have grieved against him.

Thirdly, the hiding of God's face, notes not only some distaste, and a denial of help ; but a total slight, or refusal of any care concerning us, (*Isa.* 40. 27.) *Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, my way is hid from the Lord, and my judgement is passed over from my God ;* that is, Why sayest thou, the Lord takes no care at all of me, and in that sense *Job* spake, (*chap.* 24. 1.) *Why seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not, see his dayes ?* that is, why seeing God doth not neglect times, and seasons, and how things go in the world, (there time is put for things done in time, why (I say) seeing God hath not cast off the care of the things of this world) is it thus with me ? Why am I as a man forlorn, and utterly cast off ? We may expound *Elihu* in all or any of these senses ; *when he hideth his face, or withdraweth his favour* that is, when God is displeased and refuseth to help, when God throweth up the care of a mans person, or condition, it cannot but go and be ill enough with him ; for as it followeth,

Who then can behold him ?

The face of God as taken for his essential being, cannot at all be seen, nor can we at all behold him ; *There shall no man* (saith the

the Lord, *Exod. 33. 20.*) *see my face, and live*; But, as the face of God is taken for any manifestation of his being, whether in wrath or in love, in judgement or in mercy, so it may be seen: Now when God hideth his face, that is, his favour, and will not give out any pleasing manifestations of himselfe, *who can behold him?* that is, who can behold him with comfort? who can stand before an angry God? or abide his presence? As the gracious presence of God is the sweetest, so the wrathfull presence of God is the most bitter thing in the world. *When he hideth his face, who can behold him?*

Some expound thus; if God will not shew his face, if he is not pleased to reveale himselfe, no man can know, or see any thing of him; that's a truth. We can know no more of God, then himselfe will reveale of himselfe to us; 'tis *in his light* (*Psal: 36. 9.*) that is, in the light which he causeth to shine from himselfe, that *we see light*, or what and who himselfe is, *who is light, and in whom there is no darknes at all.* If God will hide his power, or his wisdom, or his truth, or his mercy from us, who can see any thing of them? though all these perfections be alwayes more glorious in him then the beams of the Sun, yet unlesse God shew them us, we cannot perceive them. We see the light of God in Gods light; if God hath a minde to conceale himselfe, or draweth (as it were) a curtaine between the creature and himselfe, *who can behold him?* we cannot by any study, or skill, or art, or endeavour of ours come to any sight or knowledge of God, further then himselfe makes himselfe knowne. This exposition is both true and usefull; yet I conceive, when *Elihu* saith, *who then can behold him?* his meaning rather poynts at these two things.

First, Who can have any comfortable enjoyment of him; to behold a man whose displeasure we suspected, and find acceptance and freedome with him, is compared to our beholding the face of God. *I have seene thy face as though I had seene the face of God and thou wast pleased with me,* sayd *Jacob* to *Esau* (*Gen: 33. 10.*) when his brother treated him so lovingly contrary to his expectation, he looked upon it as an evidence of the favour of God to him. Or *Jacob* being much affected with the countenance and kindness of *Esau*, compared his face to the face of God, because in his reconciled face he saw (as it were) the face of God smiling upon him. This was *Dauids* argument, that God favoured

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him (*Psal. 41. 11.*) because his enemies did not triumph over him ; much more is it an argument of Gods favour , when they speake and act friendly towards us, or when we behold their face and are accepted. *Joseph* threatened his brethren, *ye shall not see my face* (or behold me) *except your brother be with you* (*Gen: 43. 3.*) if you come without him, either I will not admit you at all into my presence , or I will look sowerly upon you. Thus to behold God, is to see his face (as 'tis sayd (*Chap: 33. 26.*) the repenting sick man should) with joy.

Secondly, Who can have any confidence in him, or boldness with him; *David* speaking of godly and upright men, saith (*Pf: 34. 5.*) *They looked (or, shall look) unto him, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed* ; that is, they beheld God or came to him, with much assurance of his favour. Some dare not so much as look another in the face, for shame or feare ; but when we look a man in the face, it sheweth we have either confidence in him, and freedome with him, or courage enough against him. Now, if God hide his pleased face, or withdraw his favour, *who can behold him* confidently, or come to him with hopes to speed. Fierce *Abner* sayd to *Asael* (*2 Sam: 2. 22.*) *Turne thee aside from following me, wherefore should I smite thee to the ground* (I could easily doe it, and he did it presently) *how then should I hold up my face to Joab thy brother.* As if he had sayd, I can have no confidence to come to *Joab*, thy Generall, if I should kill thee. Guilt of evill done to others, drawes a jealousie that others will do evill to us, especially they who are neerely concern'd in the evill which we have done ; we cannot hold up our face to or behold them with expectation of acceptance and favour, to whose neere relations we have been unkind or injurious. Thus, if God hide his face *who can behold him* ? either with confidence or with comfort.

Some referre the relative *him* (*who can behold him* ?) to man; not to God ; as if the meaning of *Elihu* were this ; if God hide his face from any man, all men will hide their faces from him too ; no man will looke kindly upon such a deserted person, or give him a good look ; he shall have but frownes from men, from whom God withdraweth his favour ; that's a truth ; He that is out with God cannot keep in long with men. Usually all sorts disowne him that is forlorne and forsaken of God ; As when a mans wayes please God (because then God is pleased with him), his enemies shall be at

Quis favorem
ei exhibebit, a
quo deus vul-
tum averterit.
Drus.

peace.

peace with him. (Pro: 16. 7.) so when God is displeased with a man, his very best friends shall turne enemies to him. Yet I conceive the text carrieth it rather the other way, referring to God himselfe; *If God hide his face, who can behold him?* that is, who can confidently behold God, or draw neere to him with comfort? And so it generally comes to passe, or thus it is,

Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only.

As if Elihu had sayd; What I have affirmed, that, *when God giveth quietness, no man can make trouble, or when he hideth his face no man can behold him,* is applicable to whole nations, as well as to particular persons. This is an extensive truth, a truth of large concernment, and therefore a truth of necessary and important consideration. That which may be any mans or all mens case, should be studied by every man.

Whether it be done against a nation, &c.

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The particle which we render *against*, signifieth also *for*. We find it so translated Psal: 32. 6. and at the 36th verse of this Chapter. Now, to doe a thing for a nation or for a person, notes the doing of it with respect to or in favour of either. Thus we commonly speake in our language, *pray doe such or such a thing for me*. To this sense some render here, *whether it be done for a nation, or for a man only*. So, Mr Broughton, *whether it be done for a nation, or for an earthly man alone*. But, whether we read *for*, or *against*, the generall truth is the same. The word and power of God in sending good or evill upon nations or persons, in acting for or against them, is uncontrouleable and irresistible.

Further, to cleare the text, that word in the close of the verse, *rendred only*, signifieth, sometimes *together* (Ezra 4. 3.) sometimes *alike* (Psal: 34. 15.) and sometimes as we understand it *alone, or only*, whether it be done against a nation or a man together, or against a man only or alone, the matter is alike or the same to God. Many or one make a great difference among men in any matter, but they make no difference with God, he can deale with whole nations (in wayes of Judgement or mercy) as well as with single persons; yet because of the opposition which the text makes between *one man* and *a nation*, it is most sutable to translate it either *only* or *alike not together*.

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Thus

This Lecture
was preached
upon the Fifth
of November
1658.

Thus we see, how the Spirit of God by *Elihu* hath made a double application of the former part of the text (*when he giveth quietness, who can make trouble, &c.*) in this latter, first, to a nation; secondly, to a person. If the text were not thus exprest, it might be thus expounded and improved without any streine at all to it. But forasmuch as the Spirit of God hath told us distinctly, that this great truth concernes nations as well as persons, therefore we have a cleare ground (besides the great usefullness of it) to speake to the words in both their references. And this present memorable day (as also their native order) leades me specially to speake of them, first, under a National consideration.

When he giveth quietness to a nation, who can make trouble or disturbe the peace of it. And the text may well respect that national blessing, *peace*, because the word translated *giveth quietness*, signifies such quietness primarily, as is opposite unto warre, sedition, and tumult in a nation (*Josh: 11. 23.*) And the land rested from warre, it is this word, so (*Judg: 3. 11.*) The land had rest forty yeares. (*Judg: 3. 30.*) And the land had rest fourscore yeares. (*2 Chron: 14. 1.*) In his dayes the land was quiet ten yeares. (*Zech: 1. 11.*) And behold all the earth sitteth still, and is at rest; in all these places we have the word here rendred *quietness*, in opposition to warre; who knows not how great an unquietness warre makes wheresoever it comes? and by a like analogie, the word is sometimes rendred *to be silent*. Warre is full of clamour (*Isa: 9. 5.*) Every battell of the warrier is with confused noise. Not only is it so in some battells, but (saith that Scripture) 'tis so in all battels, Every battel of the warrier is with confused noise. What a noise is there in an Army, especially when joyning battell with another Army? what beating of drums? what sounding of trumpets? what neighing of horses? what clashing of armour? what groanings of the wounded? When God gives quietness or peace, there is none of this noise; none of this confused noise of the warrier. *Hannah* saith in her song (*1 Sam: 2. 9.*) The wicked shall be silent in darkness; that is, either they shall be destroyed and thrust into their graves, where there's nothing but rottenness and stench, darkness and silence; or they shall be so affrighted & confounded with the horror and darkness of those miseries which shall come upon them while they live, that they shall not have a word to say, the mouth of iniquity shall be stoppt. In this manner the wicked are silent in dark-

darkness; but the Lord can make his people silent in light, that is, he can give such quietness as shall at once silence the noise of warre and all their own complaints. *When he giveth quietness* (this blessed silence to nations) *who then can make trouble?*

Hence observe.

First, *The quietness or peace of nations is the peculiar gift of God.*

Whosoever hath or enjoyeth quietness, 'tis Gods work, but most eminently when nations enjoy it. Of nationall quietness the Lord spake by his Prophet (*Isa: 45. 7.*) *I forme the light, &c. I make peace, I the Lord doe all these things.* As naturall so civill light is of Gods forming; as spirituall, so temporall peace is of Gods making. And the Church was confident he would be their *peace-maker* (*Isa: 26. 12.*) *Lord thou wilt ordaine peace for us.* Some read it as a prayer, *Lord doe thou ordaine* (or command) *peace for us*; we as a profession of their faith and hopefull if not full assurance that the Lord would ordaine peace for them. The Lord gives out an order, or makes an ordinance in heaven, when he pleaseth for the peace both of Churches and nations here on earth. And the Church there had this good ground of their assurance, that he would doe it, even their former experiences of his great power and goodness in doing much for them, as it followeth, *for thou hast wrought all our workes for us*; As if they had sayd, Lord those gracious preservations which thou hast heretofore given us in trouble, and deliverances out of trouble, strengthen our faith both in praying that thou wouldest, and in believing that thou wilt, now at this pinch ordaine peace for us. To doe so is a mighty and a mercifull worke of God, and we may consider it two wayes.

First, As the giving of quietnesse to a nation is the restoring of peace, or the setting of them in a quiet state, after they have been torne and troubled with warres, and tossed with continuall tempests of trouble (possibly) for many yeares together. To bring peace out of warre, and quietness out of unsetledness, is a worke worthy of God. (*Psal: 46. 9.*) *He maketh warres to cease to the ends of the earth*; that is, all the world over. The end or ceasing of warre is quietness. And to assure us that the Lord can make an end of warres, the Psalmist in that place sheweth us the Lord spoyling all the implements, or instruments of warre, *He breaketh the bow, and cuts the speare asunder, he burneth the chari-*

ots in the fire; Here are three great instruments of warre, the bow, the speare, the chariot, all which are sometimes comprehended under that one word the *sword*, which is the most knowne and universal instrument of warre. Now, when neither sword, nor bow, nor speare, nor chariot, are to be had, we need not feare warre. And therefore that great promise of peace, runs in this tenour (*Mic: 4. 2.*) *They shall beat their swords into plow-shears, and their speares into pruning hooks* (then presently followeth) *nation shall not lift up a sword, against nation, neither shall they learne warre any more* ; There must needs be peace when the art of warre is layd by as uselesse, and shall be learned no more. That will be a blessed time indeed when the art military shall be out of date, and (being it selfe the greatest interrupter of learning) shall be learned no more. When Souldiers shall turne Husbandmen and Vine-dressers, *beating their swords into plow-shears, and their speares into pruning hooks*, then we shall have peace, and put away the remotest feares of warre. When a man casteth away his sword, we may very well conclude he intends to be quiet. Thus the Lord gives quietnesse, to nations, which have been engaged in warre, by causing warres to cease.

Secondly, He gives quietnesse to nations by continuing their peace, when warres are ceased ; for unlesse the Lord give a check to the lusts and passions, to the wrath and rage of men, plow-shears are quickly turned into swords, and pruning hookes into speares. To preserve peace is the Lords worke, as much as to give peace.

*Non minor est
virtus quam
querere, par-
tueri.*

It requires the same or as great a power to keepe our peace as to make it ; to keepe it out of the hand of the sword, as to get it out of the hand of the sword. When the king of *Assyria* threatned *Jerusalem* with a siege, the Lord preserved their peace, and sent *Hezekiah* word (*Isa: 37. 33.*) *He shall not come into this City, nor shoote an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a banke against it, for I will defend this City to save it.* The continuance of peace, and quietnesse, is a continuall giving of it. Warres returne after peace, as clouds returne after raine, unlesse the Lord prevent and forbid them.

And have not we of this nation reason to acknowledge this double mercy.

First, Was not the end of our late unnaturall warres, the gift of God ? was it not he that made our troubles to cease from one end

end of the nation to the other, yea throughout the three nations? If the Lord had not given the sword a check, or counter-mand, if the Lord had not called in the commission which he once gave the sword, it had been devouring flesh, and drinking blood to this very day. We read (as it were) a dialogue between the Prophet and himselfe concerning the sword (*Jer: 47. 6, 7.*) *O thou sword of the Lord,* (sayd the Prophet being grieved for the slaughter and desolation which the sword had made even in a strange land) *how long will it be ere thou be quiet? put up thy selfe into thy scabbard; rest and be still;* Himselfe answers himselfe; *how can it be quiet seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against Ashkelon, and against the Sea-shore? there hath he appointed it.* I spake to the sword of quietnesse (saith the Prophet) But alas! how can it be quiet, how can that sheath it selfe in its scabbard, and not in the bowels of men, seeing the Lord hath given it a charge against *Ashkelon*? As if he had sayd, I see no entreaties can perswade the sword to rest and quietness, till it hath fully executed the command of God, and done his work, though it be very bloody work, even the making of it selfe drunke with blood. The Lord can make the sword quiet; & it will hearken to no voyce but his; if the Lord give a charge for the sword to returne into the sheath then it will, and if not, it will not. The sword raged in these nations till the Lords work and will was done, and then that had done. And as we have reason to acknowledge, that the Lord hath commanded the sword back into its sheath, and given us peace out of warre, so

Secondly, That he hath continued our peace since the warre, *When he giveth quietnesse, who then can make trouble?*

Note.

If God will give those nations quietnesse, where it was not, or continue it where it is, there is no power on earth can stop, or interrupt it.

Who can make trouble, where he ordaineth peace? *Balaam* was forced to this confession (when he would have troubled the people of *Israel*, and went from mountaine to mountaine to seek divination) *I cannot curse whom the Lord hath blessed; why not, said Balak, I will give thee a good fee if thou wilt, no, saith Balaam (Numb: 23. 20.) The Lord hath blessed and I cannot reverse it.* We may put this query, *When he giveth quietnesse, who*

can?

can make trouble? especially to three sorts of persons.

First, To politick men; some presume they can trouble nations and shake the surest foundations of peace, with the engine of their braine, with their wit and subtilty. Yet this engine proves uselesse and unserviceable to that end, where the Lord gives quietnesse. *Ahitophell* was as an oracle of God for wisdom in his rimes, and he stretcht his braines upon the tenters to make trouble, but God sayd there should be peace, and therefore (as *David* prayed) *his wisdom was turned into foolishness. There is no wisdom (saith Solomon the wise, Pro: 21. 30.) nor understanding nor counsel against the Lord.*

Secondly, We may put the question (who can make trouble?) to mighty men; their power (the strength of their Armies, and arme) cannot doe it? *Senacharib* came with a mighty host to disturb *Israel*, but he could not make trouble, he could not so much as shoot an arrow against *Jerusalem*, when the Lord forbid it.

Thirdly, We may put the question (who can make trouble?) to magicall men or forcerers; They cannot doe it by their witcheries and enchantments, by their closest correspondencies with the devill himselfe. This was *Balaams* conclusion, who (it seemes) traded that way to doe mischief (*Numb: 23. 23.*) *Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be sayd of Jacob, and of Israel, what hath God wrought?* When God is resolved to give a people quietnesse, though the devill would, he cannot disturbe them. We need not feare witches or magicians (who correspond with hell to trouble the earth) if God say there shall be peace; neither policy, nor power, nor witchery, can prevaile against the purpose of God.

Then happy are that people, who *have the Lord for their God* (*Psal: 144. 15.*) what can a people desire more to make them happy, then to *have the Lord for their God*, if we consider these two things?

First, God hath a negative voyce upon all the counsells of the wisest men in the world; if he saith it shall not be, it cannot be, whosoever saith this or that shall be (*Lam: 3. 37.*) *Who is he that saith and it cometh to passe, when the Lord commandeth it not?* if he gives not his assent, nothing can passe into a law. The Lords single negative stops the affirmative votes of all men joyned in one.

Secondly,

Secondly, The Lords power is paramount ; He can effect what he willeth , whether men will or no. That's plaine in the text. *If he give quietnesse, who can make trouble ?*

To come a little nearer; This day, this *fifth of November*, which we solemnize in a thankfull remembrance of our deliverance from the *Gun-powder treason*, is a very great confirmation of this truth.

Who is there that was alive at that day (as severall here I know were) yea who is there that hath heard of that day, of the substance and circumstances, of the matter and manner of the *Gun-powder treason*, but can tell us, that a Popish party at home with their correspondents abroad, intended to make trouble in this nation; surely there was a purpose to make trouble in the nation that day, if ever there were a purpose to make trouble in any nation. What did they leave unattempted, to promote the trouble of this nation ? Counsels were joyned for a conjunction of forces to trouble this nation. The men ingaged in that plot, may properly be called *Trouble-makers* ; It was their business or their designe to trouble the waters, that themselves might fish in those waters of trouble. We may with respect to their purpose, (though God prevented it graciously.) truly say to them what *Ahab* sayd falsely to *Elijah*, *These were the men that would have troubled our Israel*; they would have made trouble in every way , and in every thing, wherein trouble could be made by men.

Would it not have made trouble to destroy the King the chiefe Governour of these three nations, with his royall issue in one day ?

Would it not have made trouble, to blow up the representative of the nation, the Parliament, in one day ?

Would it not have made trouble, to put the whole body of the people into a confused heape, without a head, in one day ?

Would it not have made trouble in the nation , to have seene Papal power, with Popish Doctrine and worship brought in againe upon us within a few dayes ?

Would it not have made trouble, to have seene poore soules imprison'd, persecuted, and consumed to ashes for their conscientious witness-bearing to the truths of the Gospel ?

Would it not have made trouble , to have lost our civil liberties, and to have had a yoke of spirituall Bondage layd upon our necks by worse then *Egyptian* task-masters ?

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Would it not have made trouble, to spill the blood of thousands? Was it not an attempt to make trouble, to attempt all these things which would probably, that I say not certainly, have been the issue of that plot, if it had succeeded? Let us therefore praise the Lord, who was pleased to prevent it, and sayd it shall not be. They did every thing to make trouble, but make trouble; they did every thing, but prosper in their designe: They took secret counsell, they took oaths, yea they took the Sacrament to assure the secrecy of those counsels and oaths. All this they did towards the making of trouble, yet they could not; God sayd at that time let *England* be in quietness, and therefore, only, those Romish Emisaries and incendiaries could not make trouble.

Again, If we consider the present season wherein we live, 'tis a confirmation of this truth, God hath given us quietnesse for some yeares; and hath he not preserved this quietnesse hitherto, against all those both persons and things that would have made trouble? if God had not confirmed our peace, we had been in trouble long before this time, but yet our peace continueth, yet it continueth; and is it not wonderfull that it should continue, if we consider.

First, The sins of the nation which are the seed of trouble, especially those two generall sins, first, unthankfullnesse for our peace; Secondly, our ill improvement of it. How have many abused their peace to nurse up their pride, wantonnesse and vanity! and being delivered from the feare of men, have even cast off the feare of God! what just cause is there, that we should loose that peace which we have used so ill, and have almost turned into a warre with God himselfe! yet hitherto the Lord hath given *England* quietness, and none could make trouble.

Secondly, If we look upon the divisions, both in opinion, and affection, that are found among us, is it not a wonder that yet we have peace! if God had not *given quietnesse*, doubtlesse these differences, of which we are so sadly full, had filled us with trouble long before this time.

Thirdly, While we consider the different interests which have been abetted and hotly pursued by too many in this nation, is it not marvellous in our eyes, that our peace is continued! divided interests make greatest distances, & open those breaches through which trouble usually enters upon a nation. When a people are of
one

one mind, of one heart and way, trouble can ſcarce find any way to come in among them. But only God (who peremptorily gives quietneſſe) can give quietneſſe to and prevent the trouble of a people who are divided in opinions, affections, and Interests. As therefore it is the moſt deſireable mercy that a people may be all united as one man, in one mind, heart, and way, according to the mind, heart, and way of God ; ſo it is a moſt admirable mercy, to ſee their peace continued while any conſiderable part among them are diſ-united in any of, eſpecially if in all theſe.

Fourthly, Conſider, that ſince the time of our peace, we have had many changes, we have been emptied from veſſel to veſſel, from hand to hand, from government to government, and from governour to governour ; and is it not matter of aſtoniſhment as well as of thanks-giving, that yet we have quietneſs ! how many have waited and hoped, yea deſired and longed for our day of trouble, by theſe changes, revolutions and vicſſitudes, but yet we have peace. Muſt we not then conclude, *If God giveth quietneſſe, none can make trouble* ; neither our ſins, nor our diviſions, nor our animoſities, nor our changes ſhall put it into any mans power (though they put an advantage into many mens hands) to make trouble where the Lord our God is graciouſly & freely pleaſed to give us quietneſs. Yet let us be in a holy feare, leſt we at laſt provoke God, and ſin away our quietneſs, and make trouble for our ſelves. The condition of a people who doe ſo is very wofull ; for ſurely (as it followeth in the text)

If he hideth his face, who then can behold him ?

This latter part of the verſe is applicable to a nation as well as the former, and therefore before I come to ſpeake of either with reſpect to a ſingle perſon, or *a man only*.

Obſerve.

God ſometimes hideth his face from whole nations, even from thoſe nations that have the outward profeſſion of his name.

As there are national mercies, ſo national calamities, as his people in common may have the ſhinings of Gods face upon them, ſo the hidings of his face from them. Did not God hide his face from the people of *Iſrael*, his peculiar people, when they were though a profeſſing people, yet a very ſinfull & provoking people ?

B b b b 2

(*Iſa:*

(*Iſa. 59. 2.*) Is it not ſayd (*Jer. 7. 12. 14, 15.*) *Goe ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I ſet my name at the firſt, and ſee what I did to it, for the wickedneſs of my people Iſrael; God would not alwayes owne that place which he ſignally called his owne, and had ſet his name there, and that, at firſt (which was a great endearment of it to him) but when they ſinned much againſt him, he would not ſo much as give them a looke of favour, no nor of pittie, till they turned from their wickedneſſe; yea he made his ſevere proceeding with them a preſident to his people in another Generation, as it followeth in the ſame place. Therefore will I doe unto this houſe which is called by my name, wherein ye truſt, and unto the place which I gave to you, and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. And I will caſt you out of my ſight, as I have caſt out all your brethren, even the whole ſeede of Ephraim. There's a nation caſt out of the ſight of God. To be caſt out of Gods ſight is more, if more can be, then Gods hiding his face from a people. The Church complained bitterly of this latter (*Pſ. 44. 24.*) *Wherefore hideſt thou thy face, and forgetteſt our affliction, and our oppreſſion.* We uſe to ſay, *Out of ſight, out of minde*; and when God leaves a nation under affliction, as if he did not minde them nor cared what became of them, then the Scripture ſaith, *he hideth his face from them, or, caſteth them out of his ſight.* I ſhall only adde three things about this hiding of the face of God from a nation.*

Fiſt, This hiding of his face, is not a ſudden-act of God, he doth not preſently nor eaſily hide his face from a people. He tells them often he will doe it, before he doth it once. The Lord warned the old world long, before he brought the flood (*Gen. 6. 3.*) *And the Lord ſayd, my ſpirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive with man, for that he alſo is fleſh: yet his dayes (wherein I will ſpare him and wait for his repentance) ſhall be an hundred and twenty yeares.* Of this patience the Apoſtle ſpake, telling us (*1 Pet. 3. 19, 20.*) That Chriſt by the Spirit which quickned him, *went and preached to the ſpirits in priſon* (not in priſon when he preached to them, but in priſon ever ſince for not obeying what he preached, as the text ſaith) *which ſometime were diſobedient, when once the long ſuffering of God waited in the dayes of Noah, while the Arke was a preparing: wherein few, that is, eight ſoules were ſaved by water; God did not preſently hide his face from that debauched Gene-*

ration,

ration, who had corrupted all their wayes, but gave them long warning, even an hundred and twenty years. And how often did God give warning before he withdrew or hid his face from the people of Israel, his special people? He sent his Prophets rising early, and sending them, saying, *Oh do not this abominable thing that I hate,* (Jer. 44. 4.) And in another place, *O Jerusalem, be instructed, lest my soul depart (or be disjoynted) from thee;* (Jer. 6. 8.) as if he had said, I am loth to depart, yea I will not depart, if thou wilt but now at length hearken to my voice, and receive instruction.

Secondly, As God is long before he begins to hide his face from a Nation, so he doth it not all at once, but gradually, or by several steps: we read (Ezek. 9. 3.) *how the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the Cherub whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house:* Then (chap. 10. 18.) *The glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the Cherubims:* And then (chap. 11. 23.) *The glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the City, and stood upon the Mountain, which is on the East side of the City.* When the Lord was departing from them, he did it by degrees; he withdrew and hid himself by little and little, as in the Eclipse of the Sun, whether partial or total, we observe the light gradually shut in and hidden from us.

Thirdly, As God is long before he hideth his face, and long in hiding it from a Nation, so (which makes it dreadful) his face being once hid, continueth long hid from Nations. He doth not return presently to them, as he often doth to particular persons. The Eclipses of Divine favour abide long upon Nations and Churches. We commonly say, *Great bodies move slowly;* And God is usually slow in his motions both from and towards great bodies; as he doth not quickly remove from them, so he doth not quickly return to them. He stayeth long before he hideth his face, and he makes them stay long before he causeth his face to shine upon them again. When for the sin of Israel God gave up both them and the Ark into the hands of the Philistines (though the Philistines vexed with the hand of God upon them, sent it back shortly after, yet) it was long before it was fully settled among them, (1 Sam. 7. 2.) *And it came to pass while the Ark abode in Kirjath-jearim, that the Lord was long; for it was twenty years, and all the house of Israel mourned over the Lord.* The Ark (which was a signe of God's

Gods presence with them) being removed, was not soon restor'd to its proper place; yea it was 20. years more after that, before it was set in its place by *David*, (2 *Sam.* 6. 17.) And whereas it is said, that in those first twenty years, *they lamented after the Lord*, this signifieth, that all those years God was (comparatively to what he had sometimes been) but as a stranger in the land, leaving them under the cruel oppressions of the Philistines: nor did they recover his favourable presence, till they solemnly repented and reformed, putting away their strange gods, and *Ashteroth*, preparing their hearts unto the Lord to serve him only, as *Samuel* exhorted them to do at the third verse of that chapter. The Jewish Nation in after ages had sad experience of this in the Babylonish captivity; when God hid his face from them, it was seventy years before he lookt upon them again: and since that Nation provoked him (by their rejection of the Gospel) to lay them aside, God hath hid his face from them above these sixteen hundred years, and they are to this day a scattered unsettled people, and wanderers among the Nations, having their hearts hardned, and their eyes shut against the light of the glorious Gospel. And as the Jewes, so many Christian Churches have for a long time felt the sad effects of these Divine hidings and withdrawals. Those seven famous Churches in *Asia*, mentioned in the second and third chapters of the Revelation, *Ephesus*, *Emyrna*, &c. have been under this woful Eclipse many hundred years; nor have those ancient Churches in *Africa*, where *Tertullian* and *Augustine* once flourished, recovered the presence of the Lord to this day. Let the Nations and Churches abroad remember this, and tremble to provoke the Lord to such departures and desertions. God hath long hid his face from the Bohemian Churches, & subjected them again to the Papal yoke; several parts of *Germany* are under the same hidings: the light is departed from them, and they are left in much darkness; their state is very deplorable, and their former purity, both as to doctrines of faith, and practise of worship (as to humane help) irrecoverable. And should not the dealings of God with them, awaken us in these Nations and Churches, to remember and consider the wonderful patience of God in continuing our peace, notwithstanding all our provocations, lest at last he hide his face from us also, and then who can behold him? A throng of evils and mischiefs will soon appear to us with open face, if once

God

God hide his face. And it will not be unuseful to instance a little in this place, what those evils and mischiefs are which throng and croud in upon Nations and Churches, when God hideth his face from them.

First, When God hideth his face from a Nation, he layeth down his former care of them, and watchfulness over them, he takes little or no notice of their case and condition, of their troubles and streights, (as was toucht in opening the Text) he regards not how it is with them, nor what becomes of them. Such apprehensions the Prophet had in reference unto the people of Israel, (*Jer. 14. 8.*) where he humbly expostulated with the Lord, *Why art thou as a stranger in the land; & as a wayfaring man that turneth aside to tarry for a night;* a stranger or a wayfaring man, intending to stay but a night in a place, thinks not himself concerned with the state of that place; if he can but get a supper and a lodging for his money that night, he troubles himself no farther: whether it be well or ill with the place, whether it be sickness or health, if he can make shift for a night, he is satisfied. Thus the Prophet conceived the Lord even as a stranger among his people, little minding what became of them, whether they did sink or swim, whether it were peace or trouble, joy or sorrow with them. And, further, he represents the Lord not only as a stranger, but as a man astonished, not only as a man who cares not to help, but as a man who cannot. An astonished man, how mighty soever he is, hath no use of his might. He that can do little with his reason (that's the case of an astonished affrighted man) can do less with his hands. Now such a one is God to his people (that is, he will do no more for them then such a one) when once he hideth his face from them.

Secondly, When the Lord hideth his face from a Nation, he hath no regard to their prayers and supplications, no not to their fasts and humiliations; that speaks sadly. Prayer is *our best strength*, it engageth the strength of God; by prayer we have our resort to God, and fetch all our help and succour in a day of trouble from his All-sufficiency. If once God say to a people, I will not hear nor answer your prayers, they are in a most forlorn condition. Thus God resolved against the people of Israel, (*Jer. 14. 12.*) *When they fast, I will not hear their cry:* And as he would not regard their own prayers, so he forbade the Prophet to pray for them, (*vers. 12.*) *The Lord said unto me, pray not for this peo-*

ple for their good ; yea, he tells them, he would not regard the prayers and interceſſions of any others for them, (*Jer. 15. 1.*) *I though Moſes and Samuel ſtood before me*, (that is, ſhould become Advocates in their behalf) *yet my heart could not be towards this people*, (that's a ſure and a dreadful prognosick of ruine, as it followeth) *caſt them out of my ſight, and let them go forth.*

Thirdly, When the Lord hides his face from a Nation, he refuseth to give them counſel, or to direct their way. We need the counſel of God as much as his ſtrength ; as we cannot do what we know unleſs he ſtrengthen us, ſo we know not what to do unleſs he counſel us. And when ever God hideth his face from a people, he hideth counſel from a people. When God hid his face from *Saul*, who was in a publick capacity, and in a publick caſe, his war with the Philiftines, O how he complained that he could get no counſel, (*1 Sam. 28. 6. 15.*) *The Lord answers me no more, neither by Urins, nor by Thummin, nor by Prophet, nor by Dreams* ; as if he had ſaid, I cannot get a word of direction from God, what to do in this calamitous and intricate condition, wherein my ſelf and my Kingdome are plung'd, by reaſon of this Invaſion ; I know not what to do, and God will not at all give me any intimation what to do, nor how to do, what is ſafeſt, or moſt conducing to my own ſafety and preſervation. The Prophet brings in the Church lamenting this effect of Gods hiding his face, (*Pſal. 74. 9.*) *We ſee not our tokens, there is not any Prophet, nor any that can tell how long* ; as if they had ſaid, heretofore God was wont to give us ſignes and tokens, he would even work miracles for us, or he would ſend a Prophet to inſtruct and adviſe us what to do, we had thoſe who could tell us *how long*, that is, how long our troubles ſhould laſt, and when we ſhould have our expected end of them ; but now we are in trouble, and no man can tell us how long, now we are left to the wide world, to ſhift for our ſelves as well as we can ; the Lord will not adviſe us what to do, nor give us his minde what's beſt to be done, or how to proceed ; thus deplorable was their condition upon the hiding of Gods face from them.

Fourthly, (which is yet worſe) when the Lord hides his face from a people, he doth not only with-hold his counſels, but gives them up to their own counſels, & that is, to their own hearts luſts, (*Pſ. 81. 12.*) *Iſrael would none of me* (ſaith God) *they would not hark-*

en to my voice : What then ? So I gave them up to their own hearts lusts, and they walked in their own counsels : and that was to give them up to a spirit of division, to a spirit of discontent, to a spirit of envie and jealousy, to a spirit of ambition, of self-seeking and emulation, and so to a spirit of distraction and confusion, and so to ruine and destruction : such and no better is the issue, when God gives a people up to their own counsels ; then they soon become a very Chaos, and run themselves into a ruinous heap. *As good have no counsel from man, as none but man's.*

Fifthly, When God hides his face from a Nation, he is ready to declare his displeasure, and the forest testimonies of his fierce anger, formally, against them ; God looks upon a sinfully sinning people as a burthen upon his heart ; he is prest, and even oppressed with them, he loaths them, his stomach turns at the thought of them, (*Isa. 1. 24.*) *Ah ! I will ease me* (the Hebrew is, I will be comforted, or I will comfort my self, that is, I will unburden my soul, and satisfie my self by taking vengeance) *of my adversaries*, that is, of my people who have rebelled against my command, and have been disobedient to my word. These the Lord counts no more as his children and friends, but as his enemies, and numbers them among his adversaries ; *Ah*, saith he, *I will ease me of mine adversaries, and avenge me of mine enemies* : I am grieved to do it, yet I must do it, I am resolved to do it. As soon as the Lord had declared that he would receive no intercession for Israel, he adds, (*Jer. 15. 1. 2.*) *Cast them out of my sight, let them go forth, and it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, whither shall we go forth ? then thou shalt say unto them, thus saith the Lord, such as are for death, to death, and such as are for the sword, to the sword ; and such as are for the famine, to the famine ; such as are for captivity, to captivity ; I will cause them to be removed into all Kingdoms of the earth, (vers. 4.) and as I will not pity them, so none shall, (vers. 5.)* All these tokens of displeasure fall upon a people when once the Lord hides his face from them. Yea then the Lord himself will go forth against them as a fierce Lion, (*Hos. 5. 14, 15.*) He was to Israel as a moth, and as rottenness, (*vers. 12.*) that is, a secret consumption, he would also be an open destruction to them as a Lion, yea as a Leopard by the way would he observe them, or lye in wait for them, and meet them as a Bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and rent the very caul of their heart, (*Hos. 13. 7, 8.*) The Lord
C c c c c God

God takes upon him the aſtings of the moſt ſavage beaſts in righteouſneſs, to ſhew how much he is provoked, when he ſeeth his people act like beaſts in unrighteouſneſs, filthineſs, cruelties, ſenſual pleaſures ; when men behave themſelves unlike men, *God will not meet them* (as he told Babylon he would not, *Iſa. 47. 3.*) *as a man*, that is, either in the weakneſs of a man, or in the compaſſions of a man ; but he will meet them either as a beaſt of prey, who hath no compaſſion, or as God in the fulneſs of his power, not drawing forth, but quite reſtraining his compaſſions. Yea, the ſpirit of God will ſtrive no more in wayes of mercy with ſuch a people, but *turning their enemy* (*Iſa. 63. 10.*) will fight againſt them. He not only forbeareth to aſſiſt them againſt, & deliver them from their enemies, but even aſſiſteth their enemies againſt them, or delivereth them up into their enemies hand.

Sixthly, When God hideth himſelf from a people, he removes their ſpiritual enjoyments ; he takes away his holy Ordinances, his Worſhip, the light and power of his Goſpel, or leaves them nothing but the ſhells and out-ſide forms of them ; they ſhall be fed with huſks, becauſe they have not improved ſweet kernels and whoſome food ; they ſhall have long ſhaddows, but little true light or Sun-ſhine. Viſion ſhall ceaſe ; God will take away his Miniſters and be gone, and then they are preſently over-run with error and ſuperſtition upon one hand, or with ignorance and prophaneneſs on the other.

Seventhly, He will ſpoil them alſo in their Civil enjoyments, he will take away good Magiſtrates, who are as a ſtaff and a ſtay, as a ſhield and a ſhelter to a Nation ; he will break the ſtay and ſtaff of Government, as he threatned (*Iſa. 3. 1, 2.*) and then (as it followeth *verſ. 5.*) *The childe ſhall behave himſelf proudly againſt the ancient, and the baſe againſt the honourable* ; he will leave them to the corruption of Juſtice, Judgement ſhall be turned away backward, and juſtice ſhall ſtand aſar off, and then *truth falleth in the ſtreets, and equity cannot enter*, (*Iſa. 59. 14.*) and after all this, what will he do with them ? He will either leave them to the worſt of National evils, total Anarchy, or, *he will give children to be their Princes, and babes ſhall rule over them*. When God hid his face from the Jewiſh Nation, he broke their Government by taking away ten Tribes out of *Rehoboams* hand, and putting them under *Jeroboam* ; and out of his hand they fell into the hand of ſe-
veral

veral other wicked Princes, til at last they were carried into captivity by the common enemy. These & the like are the woful effects of Gods hiding his face from a Nation; from all which we may well conclude with *Elihu* in the Text, who then can behold him? who can bear his wrathful presence, when his face or favourable presence is hidden from us? To shut up this point, I shall only adde, that because these hidings of Gods face are gradual, (as was shewed before) therefore they are little taken notice of; as the Prophet complained (*Hos. 7. 9.*) *Gray hairs are here and there upon them, and they know it not*; that is, they are in a declining condition, (gray hairs are the signes of old age, which is the declension of mans life, he alludes from the body Natural, to the body Civil or Politick, they are I say, in a declining, weakning, spending condition) yet they lay it not to heart. And that's a sore, if not the chiefeft judgement of God upon a Nation, when hiding his face, he hides his judgements from them, and gives them up to hardness of heart, to blindness of minde, and a spirit of stupidity, that they see not nor take notice of their own danger, nor the departure of God from them, which is the cause of it. And still the more God hideth his face from a Nation, the more miserable they are, and withal, the more insensible of their misery. So much from that consideration of the Text, as to a Nation, *When he giveth quietness, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? Whether it be against a Nation,*

*Eorum mihi
viderur idone-
us sensus &
omnino Germa-
ni qui hanc
libertatem dei,
sive pacem con-
cedendi sive
condemnandi
(vel turbandi)
ad tyrannos
tantum coarctat
& eos qui im-
pide vivunt.*
Sanct.

Or against a man only.

As this verse respects a man only, or a single person, it is expounded two or three wayes.

First, Of Oppressors and wicked men; as if he had said, *When God will give a wicked man quietness or prosperity in his sinful way, who can make his estate troublous, or trouble him in his estate? He shall be quiet while the will of God is to suffer him to be so; and if God once hide his face from him, that is, declareth displeasure against him, who can behold him? that is, who among the mightiest of wicked oppressors, can lift himself up against, or stand before God?*

*Si deus patrem
tribuat impiis,
quoniam illius pro-
videntiam &
arcana judicia
condemnare au-
debit. Gregor.
best Philip.*

Secondly, The words are expounded of the oppressed, or of godly men; as if he had said, when God is minded or resolved to give peace and quietness to any of his faithful servants, who can hinder him, or trouble them? and when he is pleased for reasons

best known to himself, to leave any of his faithful servants in darkness, and withdraw the light of his countenance from them, who among them can behold him? that is, bear or endure his angry appearances.

Quum ipse tranquillat A third expounds the former part of the verse according to the second Exposition of the whole verse concerning the oppressed or afflicted godly, *if God will give them quietness, who can give them trouble?* *sc. miseris afflicto.* And the latter part of the verse, of Oppressors, *if he hideth his face from wicked and unjust men, who can behold him?* *sc. cum abscondit faciem (sc. ab improbis) quis contemplabitur eum. i. e. quoniam improborum avertenti Deo ausit obistere.* Jun.

Further, Some who take this sence, do not understand it as an act of God hiding his own face, but as an act of God hiding the face of the wicked Oppressor; as if it had been said, *When God hideth a wicked mans face, and wraps him up as a condemned man, or when, by the command of the Magistrate, after his legal tryal his face is covered, being ready to seal the warrant for his execution; (Hamans face was covered as soon as the Kings word went out against him) then who can behold him?* Some insist much upon this interpretation, in allusion to the custome of those times, when condemned malefactors had their faces covered; and indeed, when God wraps up the oppressors face as a condemned man, *who can behold him*, that is, who can hold up his face against God, or resist him in this work of justice. But I intend not to prosecute the personal consideration of the Text under these distinct notions, but shall only take up the general sence; *When he giveth quietness to a man, who can make trouble? and when he hideth his face from a man, who can behold him?* I shall only adde Master Broughtons gloss upon the whole verse; *when for the poor he kills the mighty, none can stay him; and when he hideth his favour, none can finde it.*

Hence Observe.

First, *The quietness or peace of any man, of every man, is of the Lord.*

If God will have a wicked man live in quietness, so it shall be, and God hath given, and doth often give them quietness. *I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green Bay tree, (Psal. 37. 35.) David spake this from a good witness, the sight of his eye: I (saith he) have seen the wicked in much outward*

outward pomp and splendour, and as the outward peace and quietness, pomp and splendour of the wicked is from God, so also is both the outward and inward peace of any godly man.

First, The outward peace, or the peace of a godly man in his outward estate, is of the Lord, (*Psal. 4. 8.*) *I will both lay me down in peace and sleep, for thou only makest me to dwell in safety*: that is, thou O Lord wilt watch over me in the night, and not suffer me to be surprized by any sudden danger, and therefore I will quietly repose my self upon thy gracious promises, and throw off those cares and fears, which as thorns in the pillow, would not suffer me to rest, when I lye down in my bed: the Lord is my safety, even the rest of my body. In the 5th chapter of this book (*ver. 23, 24.*) *Eliphaz* telleth us, how the Lord secures the outward condition of a good man, and gives him such quietness, that even *the very beasts of the earth shall be in league, and the stones of the field at peace with him, and he shall know* (or be assured) *that his tabernacle shall be in peace.*

Secondly, The inward peace, the soul peace, the spiritual peace of a godly man is much more from the Lord, (*John 14. 27.*) *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth, so give I unto you*; as if Christ had said, I will not deal with you after the rate of the world, that is, either deceitfully and falsely, or rigorously and unjustly; I will not give you such measure as the world gives you, nor in such a manner; *I give you my peace, therefore let not your hearts be troubled, neither be you afraid*: what-ever outward trouble the world can give you, be not afraid of it before it cometh, nor troubled at it when 'tis come, I will give you inward peace in the midst of all your troubles. Christ invites the weary and the heavie laden to come to him, with this promise, *I will give you rest*, (*Matth. 11. 29.*) soul-rest he meaneth; that Title or name of Christ, *Shiloh*, (*Gen. 49. 10. The Scepter shall not depart from Judah, until Shiloh come*) signifies tranquility, peace, and rest; As Jesus Christ hath bought our peace and rest with his blood, so he bears it in his name. The fountain of our soul-peace is the heart of the father, *Grace and Peace from God the Father*, &c. (*Col. 1. 1, 2. 1 Thess. 1. 1.*) The purchase or price of this peace, is the blood of the Son, (*Col. 1. 22.*) *He hath made our peace through the blood of his Cross*: Our peace cost dear, it cost blood, and that the blood of the Son of God. The convey-

conveyance of this peace is made by the holy Spirit; he is sent to bring the good tydings of peace unto believers: the Spirit speaks peace from God, and witnesseth with our spirits, that we are at peace with God. And as this peace is at first from God the Father as the fountain of it, & from God the Son as the Purchaser of it, and from God the holy Ghost as the Speaker of it; so the continuing and renewing of this peace is from the same God. He establisheth and setteth the heart in that peace which he hath given, and he restoreth that peace when at any time we have lost it, and the heart is unsetled. *David's* soul being unquiet, and his peace ravell'd after his sin, he address'd to God for the renewing of it, (*Pſal.* 51. 12.) *Restore to me the joy of thy salvation.* *David* petitioned the restoring of his peace, while he petitioned the restoring of his joy: 'tis possible to have peace without joy, but there can be no joy in that soul, which hath not first attained to peace. We must wait upon God both for the restoring of our peace when it is departed, and for the continuance of it when it is enjoyed. *When he giveth quietness* to a man, either as to soul, or body, or both,

who can make trouble?

Note, Secondly.

The quietness or peace which God bestows upon any person is an invincible, an insuperable peace and quietness, as to all that this world can do, or he suffer in this world.

If God will give a quiet outward estate, no man can disturb it; when God gave *Job* outward quietness, what a mighty man was he? how did he flourish? Nor could any break his outward peace; Satan confest it in the first chapter, *Thou hast made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath, on every side*; there is not the least gap open, no nor stake loosned in his hedge, who can touch him? who can come at him? I cannot touch him, Sabceans and Chaldeans cannot touch him. While the Lord giveth and guardeth our outward peace, it is inviolable. And as to our spiritual peace, if the Lord speak it, who or what can trouble the soul?

First, The afflictions, tribulations, and vexations which we meet with in the world, cannot trouble this inward peace; while storms are without, there will be a calm within; the soul may be at peace, and

and the conscience quiet, in the greatest visible confusions. Let the world turn about and overturn, let it shake and break into a thousand pieces, this peace abides unshaken, unbroken: let the world rage in the heat either of war or persecution, yet the heart is serene, fixt, and quiet, like Mount Zion, that cannot be removed. Christ tells his Disciples (*John 16. 33.*) *These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace*; (and in the same verse he foretells them) *In the world you shall have tribulation*: as if he had said, you shall have a peace concurrent and contemporary with your tribulation; trouble from the world shall not hinder the peace you have from me; yea, my peace shall conquer the troubles you have in the world. Thus the Prophet triumphed in believing, (*Hab. 3. 17.*) *Though the labour of the Olive should fail, and the Vine yeild no fruit, though there be no Calves in the stall, nor Sheep in the fold, &c. yet I will joy in the Lord, and rejoyce in the God of my salvation.* To rejoyce in the Lord, is more then to be quiet, or to have peace in the Lord. *Joy is the exaltation of peace, it is the most delicious fruit of peace*: The worst of worldly evils cannot despoil us of the least purely spiritual good, much less of the greatest. *Him wilt thou keep in perfect peace, whose minde is stayed on thee,* (*Isa. 26. 3.*) That's perfectly perfect to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken away; yet that is truly perfect, to which though something may be added, yet it cannot be either totally or finally taken away. Such is the soul-peace of true believers in this life, and therefore a perfect peace.

Secondly, As outward tribulation cannot hinder the soul-peace of a godly man, so the policy, plots, and temptations of Satan our arch-enemy cannot, yea his charges and most spiteful accusations shall not. The great designe of the devil, is, to destroy and devour souls, his own condition being most miserable, he at once envies all those who are not in the same condition, and attempts to make them so; and when he fails in that attempt, the destruction of souls, yet he will not cease to attempt their molestation, and to trouble those whom he cannot utterly devour. Now, as Satan cannot at all prevail in the former attempt, the destroying of souls, so he cannot wholly prevail in the latter, the troubling of souls. Hence that gallant challenge of the Apostle, (*Rom. 8. 33, 34.*) *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods elect? it*

is God that justifieth : who is he that condemneth, it is Christ that dyed, yea rather, that is risen again, &c. As if he had said, let all the enemies of our spiritual peace rise up and combine together, they shall not be able to condemn, that is, wholly to discourage or disquiet the heart of a believer, he having received (his *quietus est*) rest and peace from God, in the justification of his person, and the pardon of his sins. Satan can do much, and would do more (if his chain were lengthned, and he not restrained) to the trouble and molestation of our souls, there's not a godly man living should rest an hour in quiet for him, if he might have his wish or his will ; but because God gives quietness to some believers, and will not have it so much as stirr'd, therefore Satan cannot make any trouble at all in their souls, but they live in the constant light of God's countenance, and in the joy of the holy Ghost. And because the quietness which every believer hath is the gift of God through Jesus Christ, who hath made their atonement, and established their peace, through the blood of his Cross, therefore Satan cannot make any such trouble in any of their souls, as shall for ever destroy their peace, or dissolve their quietness, though for many reasons, all serving his glory, and their good, God suffereth Satan many times, possibly for a long time to entangle and interrupt it. Temptations to the committing of sin, and accusations or charges about sin committed, may exceedingly hinder and shake the peace of a believer ; but, as the sins to which he is tempted cannot hurt his peace, when he resists and overcomes them, so the sins into which he falleth through temptation, cannot destroy his peace, because those sins shall certainly be destroyed both by repentance and pardon.

Thirdly, The thunders of the Law cannot take away the peace of that soule, to whom God giveth quietness. Christ having in his owne person fulfilled the Law for beleivers, both doing the duty, and enduring the penalty of it, he hath delivered them from the terror and curse of the Law, himselfe having been made a curse for them (*Gal. 3. 13.*) So then if neither tribulations nor temptations, nor the terrors of the Law can make trouble, where God giveth quietness ; we may conclude, nothing can.

There is a double Consideration upon both which, we may demonstrate, that if God giveth quietness, either outward or inward, none can make trouble.

First,

First, Because, as God is soveraigne and so may dispose peace and quietness, to whom he pleaseth, or at his pleasure, when he will, or to whom he will; so he hath an all-sufficiency to maintaine and confirme, to preserve and protect the outward peace of any man, against all the powers of this world; and the inward peace of a godly man against all the powers of hell, against the terrors of the Law, and the accusations whether of Satan or of his owne Conscience.

Secondly, None can destroy the peace of a godly man, because it is a perfect peace, as was shewed before from that promise in the Prophet (*Isa: 26. 3.*) *Him wilt thou keepe in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.* For, being a perfect peace it will not decay of it selfe; and because 'tis perfect God will neither destroy it himselfe, nor suffer any else to destroy it. *Marke the perfect man* (saith David, *Psal: 37. 37.*) *and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.* He is a perfect man whose end is peace, and that is perfect peace which holds to the end, or which shall never end. The peace which God giveth is perfect; First, because 'tis established upon perfect righteousness, *the righteousness of God.* That righteousness which is the roote of our peace is called the righteousness of God, both because God hath appoynted it, and because God hath wrought it. Jesus Christ *God-man* is the Lord our righteousness, and the Prince of our peace; or as the Apostle expresth it (*Heb: 7. 1, 2.*) *He is Melchisedec, being by interpretation King of righteousness, and after that also King of Salem, which is King of peace.* (*Isa. 32. 17.*) *The work of righteousness is peace, and the fruit of it is quietnesse and assurance for ever.* Righteousnesse is such a foundation of peace, as cannot be shaken, and therefore that peace which is built upon it cannot be utterly overthrowne, how much soever it may be shaken.

Secondly, 'Tis a perfect peace, because it was obtained by an absolute victory over all the enemies of it. That people must needs be in perfect peace who have got a perfect conquest over all their enemies, and have got their opposers under their feet. Now the spirituall peace which God giveth his people, ariseth from a perfect conquest over all their enemies. First, the world is perfectly conquered by Christ (*John 16. 33.*) *Be of good cheare, I have overcome the world.* Secondly, the Devill is perfectly con-

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quered by Christ (*Heb. 2. 14.*) *He hath destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the Devill.* He is more then conquered who is destroyed; Christ hath destroyed the Devill, who is the destroyer, though not as to his being, though not as to his will to destroy, yet as to his power to destroy those whom he hath redeemed, and will eternally save. Thirdly, Christ hath also perfectly conquered the Law (not by destroying but) by fulfilling it. Christ was above all that the Law required or commanded, and so he did at once freely submit to it, and fully (as to any hindrance of a believers peace) subdue it; he holdeth it under him as well as he was made under it. And he was contented for that very reason to be made under the Law, that he might hold it under him, and that we might not be under (the dread of) the Law (though we must walke and worke by the rule of it) but under grace.

'Tis matter of strong consolation to poore soules, that when the Lord giveth quietness none can make trouble. And hence we also learne, that all the breaches which are made upon the peace of the people of God, are from God himselfe. As those breaches are meritoriously from themselves, so efficiently from God himselfe; till he breaks their peace none can.

Thirdly, From the second branch, *When he hideth his face, who then can behold him?* This being applicable to a single person as well as the former.

Observe.

God sometimes clouds his face from his owne servants, and children.

These words, *When he hideth his face*, suppose that God sometimes doth so, and the Scripture else-where testifies that God hath often done so; *God hath love alwayes in his heart towards his children, but he hath not alwayes favour in his face towards them;* his appearances are not alwayes the appearances of a friend, he may appeare angry, and turne away his face as if he would not be spoken with. Of this we find frequent complaints in Scripture; and I might speake much to this poynt, but I have already met with it (*Chap. 13. 24.*) and therefore I passe from it.

Only from the connexion of these words, *When he hideth his face, who can behold him?*

Note

Note.

The hiding of Gods face, or the vaying of his favour is exceeding grievous unto any person.

When he doth it, *who can behold him?* This manner of speaking doth not only hold out, that if God will hide his face no man can see him, or know him; for God is a secret to all men untill he is pleased to reveale himselfe; yea all the truths of the Gospel are secrets, and mysteries, till God is pleased to reveale them and make them knowne (*Math: 11. 25.*) *Father I thank thee* (saith Christ) *that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes;* that is, thou hast not opened them to the wisest, &c. (there needs no other hiding of them from the wisest of men, than a forbearance to open them) but to the babes, who are (though weake, yet) humble and teachable, thou hast opened them, and opened their eyes and hearts to see and receive them. This speech holds out not only this truth, that when God doth not reveale himselfe, no man can know him or any thing of his minde, or that neither his nature, or his will are knowne but by some way of revelation; but this forme of speaking (*Who can behold him?*) plainly tells us, that if God hideth his favour, he is so terrible, that none can have the boldness or courage to behold him. For the hiding of his face, implyeth an appearance of anger and displeasure; and when he is angry, who can behold him? *If the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance,* as the Apostle speakes (*2 Cor: 3. 7.*) surely then no man can stedfastly behold the face of God when his countenance is filled with wrath. Some said to Christ (*John 14. 8.*) *Shew us the Father and it sufficeth;* that is, reveale to us the love and good will of the Father, and that will satisfie us, that will fill up all the desires and longings of our soules; we shall have nothing more to wish for, nothing more to look after, if thou wilt but shew us the father. Now, on the other side, if the Father will not shew himselfe, if the Father will hide himselfe from the soule, what then can suffice? what can comfort? where is our refuge or rest? *As when God is quiet and favourable to us, he can make all things favourable and* *tranquillus* *quiet to us;* So, if God be displeased, nothing can be pleasing to *deus* *tranquil-* *lat omnia.* a soule that is sensible of his displeasure. A believer looses not

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only the joy and triumph of his faith, but his very peace, he is not only in a dark, but in a disturb'd condition, not knowing where to repose himselfe, or rest his head, when God hideth his face.

Take this inference from it.

If the hiding of Gods face be so terrible, then take heed of provoking him to hide his face.

For though we are not tenants at will for our peace in reference unto the world, in reference to men, in reference to devills; yet we are only tenants at will for our peace in reference unto God. He can take away our peace; and he doth usually continue our peace, only so long as we behave our selves well. As some have *Letters Patents* for great offices which run in that tenour; *They shall enjoy them* (quam diu se bene gesserint) *as long as they carry themselves well*; but upon default or mal-administration they may be turned out of all; so I say, though we are not at the will of the world, nor of any creature, for the holding of our peace, yet we are at the will of God for it. And as he sometimes meerly out of prerogative hideth his face (as was shewed *Job* 13. 24.) that he may try what a soule will doe in a dark condition, and that he may declare what the strength of his invisible grace can doe when nothing is visible, no not any the least ray or shine of favour from himselfe to support and comfort the soule, I say, though God doth thus in a prerogative way sometimes hide his face) yet usually he doth it not, but upon some default in us, especially our neglect of him; when we regard not the face of God, and grow slight as to our valuations of his presence, then he withdraweth his presence and vayles his face towards us; and when we fall into any grosse sin (such was the case of *David*, *Psal.* 51.) God takes us upon default, and leaves us in a sad condition, as he did *David*, who complained that even his bones were broken, and that he had lost the joy of his salvation, which upon the renewing of his faith and repentance, he begg'd earnestly might be restored to him, and it was. Therefore if you would keepe the light of Gods Countenance, keepe close to the light of Gods Commandement. No marvaile if we be under the hidings of the face of God, when we are turning our backs upon God! Sin is a turning from God, a turning our backs upon God; and is it any wonder.

wonder if God turne his face from sinners ? To turne our backe upon God is the worst of a sinfull condition, and to find God turning his backe upon us, or hiding his face from us, is the worst of a miserable condition. What can comfort us, when the God of all consolation will not look upon us, unlesse in displeasure ? What pleasure (but the pleasure of sin for a season, which ends, without repentance, in endlesse torment, what pleasure, I say) can that soule take in whom God taketh no pleasure, or with whom he is not pleased ? It is very sad with the soule, when we loose the sight of our owne graces (sometimes a gracious heart cannot see any worke of grace, nor perceive any workings of grace in him, but thinks he hath no faith in God, no love to God, no sorrow for sin, this is sad) but it is much more sad to loose the sight of the face of God, to have the favour of God withdrawne from us. This made *Jonah* complaine (*Chap: 2. 4.*) *I am cast out of the sight of thine eyes* ; he lookt upon himselfe as an out-cast, and then *Jonah* thought himselfe as cast into the belly of hell (*v. 2.*) When God hides his face from us, or will not vouchsafe us a sight of his pleased face, we are as in the belly of hell, as *Jonah* bemoaned himselfe. What is the glory and happinesse of heaven ? Is it not the sight of the face of God ? is it not the cleare vision and manifestation of God ? Glory is that estate wherein God will never once hide his face, nor look off from his glorified Saints, no not one moment to all eternity. Now the happinesse which we have here, the heaven which we have upon earth consists in this also ; when we live neere God by believing, and behold his face by faith ; when God lifts up the light of his countenance upon us, we are (as it were) lifted up from earth to heaven. *As vision in heaven will make us happy for ever, so hidings on earth make us miserable for the time.* And that which is the very hell of a godly man upon earth, the worst hell, he can or shall have, is this, when God hideth his face from him ; Therefore take heed you doe not put the Lord upon withdrawing from you through your default ; This favour, the shine or light of Gods face is continued or denied to us, usually upon these termes, as we behave our selves well or ill towards him.

JOB. Chap. 34. Vers. 30.

That the hypocrite reigne not, lest the people be ensnared.

THESE words are the conclusion of *Elihu's* discourse, about the executions of divine Justice, upon the sons of men; And in them we have two things; First, the power; Secondly, the impartiality of divine Justice. God is so powerfull, that he can pull downe the Mighty, and he is so impartiall that if there be cause, he will not spare to doe it.

Or in the words we have to consider these three things.

First, The character of the person upon whom the Justice of God is executed, The *hypocrite*.

Secondly, The Judgement it selfe, 'tis a stop to his greatness, *that he reigne not*.

Thirdly, We have the grounds of this Judgement, which are two-fold.

First, His wicked purpose, against the people; He, if suffered, would lay snares for the people.

Secondly, Gods gracious protection of the people; He will not have the people ensnared.

That the hypocrite reigne not, lest the people be ensnared.

927 significat
sceleratum, pro-
fanū, plerumq;
autem vertitur
hypocrita.

What a hypocrite is, and what the importance of the original word is, here translated *hypocrite*, hath been opened from some other passages in this booke. I shall only say thus much further, that the word imports, First, a filthy thing disguised or covered; For a hypocrite is a filthy prophane person, under the cover or disguise of holiness. Our English word *knave* is neere in sound to this Hebrew word *chanaph*, and some conceive 'tis derived or taken from it. And to be sure, every hypocrite is a prophane person, though all prophane persons are not hypocrites; Some wicked and prophane ones care not who knoweth they are so; yet very many who are indeed prophane and wicked cover it, what they can, and shew that only whereof they have only a shew, somewhat of godlinesse or of goodnesse.

Again, There are hypocrites of two makes or straines;

First,

First, Religious, or Church hypocrites. Secondly, State, or Civil hypocrites, and sometimes these two are combined in one. 'Tis possible for a man who pretends not to Religion, yet to be a hypocrite; A Magistrate, whether supream or subordinate, may offer very fair for the profit and liberty of the people whom he governeth, when he mindes no such thing; yea, he may not only offer fair for the good of a people, as to their outward profits and liberties, but as to the good of Religion, and the benefit of their souls, and yet minde no such thing; we may take the hypocrite in this Text, as twisted up, or compounded of both these; *The State hypocrite and the Religious are sometimes bound up together. That the Hypocrite*

Reigne not.

To reigne is the priviledge of Supream Powers; *By me Kings reigne*, saith Wisdome, that is Christ, (*Prov. 8. 15.*) and when *Paul* saw how high the Corinthians carryed it in spirituals, he by way of allusion tells them (*1 Cor. 4. 8.*) *ye have reigned like Kings without us*; ye are got (as ye suppose) to the top, and into the very throne of Religion, and you think your selves able to manage all difficulties, and can do well enough there without our help; But to the Text.

This *not reigning* of the hypocrite may be taken two wayes.

First, As a stop given him by the providence of God, from *מלך* getting up into the throne, or from getting the power of a Nation into his hands; thus sometimes God saith to the hypocrite, *Thou shalt not reigne*, that is, thou shalt not exalt thy self, though thou attempt it.

Secondly, This *not reigning* may be taken for a stop to the progress of his power, when he hath both attempted and attained it; and that two wayes, either first by taking him away from his power; or secondly, by taking away his power from him; as *Daniel* told *Belshazzar*, while he minded him of the greatness of his father *Nebuchadnezzar* (who had all the world (upon the matter) at his command) as also of his fall from that greatness, (*Dan. 5. 19, 20.*) *Whom he would, he set up; and whom he would, he put down; but when his heart was lifted up, and his minde hardened in pride, he was deposed from his Kingly Throne, and they took his glory from him*: He was deposed, or as the Chaldees hath it, (so we put

Mem regnat
Negationem
includit iuxta
linguae morem,
& in
מלך
ab offendiculo
similiter ut dei
magis exolletur
justitia si-
mul & poten-
ria, qui reges de
throno suo de-
icit ut popu-
lum ejus la-
queis irretitur
liberet ab illi-
gloria
ut Merc.

put in the margin) *He was made to come down from his Princely throne*; either of theſe wayes doth God (who is *the King of kings, and Lord of lords*) when he pleaſeth, put a ſtop to, or check the progreſſs of falſe hearted Princes, that have either got their power by flatteries and pretenſions to that good which they intended not, or who exerciſe their power ſo. *That the hypocrite reigne not,*

Left the people be enſnared.

The root of the word here rendred *to enſnare*, ſignifieth the ſpreading of a Net, or the ſetting of a Grin, ſuch as Fowlers and Hunters make uſe of, to take Beaſts or Birds with; and thus God himſelf ſpake concerning his dealing with Babylon, (*Jer. 50. 24.*) *I have laid a ſnare for thee, and thou art alſo taken, O Babylon, and thou waſt not aware*; litteral Babylon was a ſnare to the people of God of old, and ſo is myſtical Babylon at this day. *The great Hypocrite, or Snare-ſetter, reigns in or over Babylon*; therefore ſaith God, thou who haſt ſet ſnares for my people, ſhall be enſnared, thou ſhalt be taken unawares, I have ſet a ſnare to catch and hold thee faſt. When *Elihu* ſaith, *left the people be enſnared*, it ſeems to intimate, that God will prevent the enſnaring of a people by the hypocrite; He ſhall not reigne, *left the people be enſnared*, or left they ſhould come into ſnares. There is another reading, which gives the reaſon from the ſnares which the people have already been entangled with, *becauſe of the ſnare, or becauſe the people have been enſnared*, (therefore ſaith the Lord) *let not the hypocrite reigne*; thus God revengeth the peoples wrong, and doth juſtice upon thoſe that had ſet ſnares for them. So much for the general ſence of theſe words, and the opening of them.

There is a ſecond reading of the whole verſe, which carryeth the ſence ſomewhat another way, and yet may be of uſe, and yeild us ſome profitable conſiderations, but I ſhall not meddle with that, till I have proſecuted thoſe obſervations which ariſe clearly from our own reading.

The words in general hold forth the heart of God towards falſe hearted men, he cannot abide them, nor will he ſuffer them long to abide, eſpecially not to abide in power and greatneſſe; *That the hypocrite reigne not, left the people be enſnared.*

Hence

Hence Note. First,

A hypocrite is a person hated of God, and hurtful to men.

He is therefore hated of God, because hurtful to men. And therefore God is not pleased he should reign, either as to reign is taken strictly, for the exercising of Sovereign power; or, as to reign may be taken largely, for the exercising of any power, and living in the height of prosperity. For the clearing of this truth, that a hypocrite is hated of God, I shall shew, first the nature of an hypocrite; secondly, give the distinctions of hypocrites; thirdly, make some discoveries who is an hypocrite. To the

First, An hypocrite in his general state or nature, is (as I may say) *a wicked man in a godly mans clothes*; he hath an appearance of holiness, when there's nothing but wickedness at the bottome. There are two great parts of the hypocrites work, first, to shew himself good, which he is not; this is properly the work of simulation or feigning: secondly, to cover that real evil which he is or doth: this is properly the work of dissimulation or cloaking. The hypocrite strives as much to appear what he is not, as not to appear what he is; he makes a semblance of that purity which he loves not, and he dissembleth that impurity which he loves and lives in.

Secondly, We may consider hypocrites under this distinction. First, there is a *simple hypocrite*, who hath not the good which he thinks and believes he hath; thus every one that professeth or nameth the name of Christ, and is not really converted, is an hypocrite; because he hath not that which he seems to have, yea, which possibly he verily believes he hath; I may call such a one (though it may seem a very strange expression) *a sincere hypocrite*; he doth not intend to deceive others, but is deceived himself, because he hath not the root of the matter in him, nor the power of godliness, though he brings forth some seeming fruits of godliness, and is much in the form of it. Such we may conceive shadowed out to us by the foolish Virgins; they made a profession, they had their lamps, yea, they had oyl in their lamps, they did somewhat which was considerable in the outward duties of Christian Religion, and they hoped to be accepted with Christ, but they had *no oyl in their vessels with their lamps, as the wise Virgins had*, (Math. 25. 4.) that is, they had no grace in their hearts,

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nor

nor did they minde the getting of that till it was too late, (v. 10.) but satisfied themselves with that little oyle in their lamps to make the blaze of an external profession. Such as these are simple hypocrites, being pleased with a shell instead of a kernel, and with a shaddow, neglecting the substance. These hypocrites are in a very deplorable condition; yet these are not the hypocrites which I intend in this point, or have here to do with.

There are a second sort of hypocrites, commonly called *gross hypocrites*, such as hold that out which they know they have not, such as know they have nothing in or of Religion, but the shew of it; such as work by art, or with a kinde of force upon themselves in all the good they do, and duties they perform towards God, and about the things of God. They do nothing as the Apostle saith Timothy did (Phil. 2. 20.) *naturally, I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state*. The word *naturally* is not there opposed to *spiritually*, but to *artificially*, or to *forcedly*. What a sincere heart doth in the things of God, he doth it naturally, that is, it floweth from an inward principle, it is not forced from him, but the hypocrite doth all as it were by a kinde of art or force upon himself. The Lord chargeth the Jews with this kinde of hypocrisie, (Isa. 58. 2.) *They seek me daylie, and delight to know my wayes, as a Nation that did righteousness*; that is, they acted with an appearing forwardness, like those who truly delight to know my wayes; yet all this was but as a piece of art, for as the Lord upbraided them (vers. 3, 4.) they really kept their sins, and walkt in their own wayes of oppression, strife, and debate; yea they made all that noise about humbling themselves, that they might the more undiscernedly *smite others with the fist of wickedness*: and therefore saith the Lord (v. 5.) *Is it such a fast that I have chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul*, &c. and then for many dayes to afflict both the souls and bodies of his brethren? or to abstain a day from meat, and glut himself with sin? That's the strain of the hypocrite, he (as I may say) maintains and drives two trades, he hath a trade for God, and the wayes of God, and he hath a trade for sin, and the wayes of wickedness; this is his course, (Jer. 12. 2.) *Thou art neer in their mouth, but far from their reins*; they speak of thee, but they have no desires to thee, no affections for thee, thou art far enough from their reins; they act a part in Religion, but they neither partake of Religion, nor with it.

Thirdly,

Thirdly; There are others, who beſides that they are groſs hypocrites, may alſo be called *deſigning or plotting hypocrites*; for they that ſerve God *with a reſerve*, as to any ſin or by-way, uſually ſerve him with a deſigne, or for an end of their own. Chriſt (*Matth. 23. 14*) ſpeaking of groſs hypocrites, ſuch as the Pharifees were, ſaith, *they devour widows houſes, and in a pretence make long prayers*; they pray long in a pretence, or under a pretence; that is, they have a plot or a deſigne in prayer, they pray, not purely to enjoy communion with God, nor purely to honour God; but they make uſe of prayer, and under pretence of that, do other work. Chriſt doth not there ſpeak againſt, nor diſparage long prayers, as ſome do, to the great reproach of the Spirit and grace of God, but he chargeth them with praying long in a *pretence*: pray heartily, and then pray as long as you will; other due circumſtances being obſerved, the more you pray, the more is God pleaſed. But whether prayers are long or ſhort, if done in a pretence, or with a deſigne to do miſchief to others, or only to get ſome worldly profit and advantage to our ſelves (as thoſe Pharifees prayed) they are an abomination to the Lord. *'Tis not the length of prayer, but the end of prayer which diſcovers hypocrifiſie.* The prophet *Iſaiah* (*chap. 32. 6.*) gives us a deſcription of this groſs deſigning hypocrite, *The vile perſon will ſpeak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practice hypocrifiſie, and to utter error before the Lord*: while the hypocrites heart worketh iniquity, his tongue ſpeaks villany; not that all his words are villanous words, for then he were not an hypocrite, but a profeſt prophane perſon; but he is ſaid to *ſpeak villany*, becauſe how pious, and ſpecious, and godly ſoever his diſcourſe is, yet he hath a villanous intent in ſpeaking, and his heart at the ſame time is working iniquity, to practice hypocrifiſie.

Now that I may a little more unmask this plotting hypocrite, I will ſhew you a fourfold plot or deſigne, which ſuch hypocrites have in their moſt zealous profeſſions of, and pretendings to Religion.

Fiſt, They deſigne their own praiſe or eſtimation among men; Chriſt makes this diſcovery in his Sermon upon the Mount, (*Matth. 6. 2. 5.*) *Do not as the hypocrites, for all they do, (whether they give almes, or pray, or faſt,) is not for the glory of God, but that they may have glory of men, and be pointed at for cha-*

ritable and holy persons; *Praise or glory with men is the food of hypocrisie.* If the hypocrite have but an applause from, and acceptance with men, he doth not look after acceptance with God, which above all things a sincere heart looketh after, and laboureth for; *In this we labour* (saith the Apostle, 2 *Cor.* 5. 9.) *that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him;* that's the highest ambition of a sincere heart: but the hypocrites ambition is to be accepted of, and to have praise among men; and therefore hypocrites are more troubled, if at any time they fail in expressing themselves to men, then because (which they do at all times) they fail and falter in their affections to God; whereas he that is sincere and honest with God, can bear it well enough though he hath not such plausible expressions towards men, because he knoweth his affections stand right with God. That great Macedonian *Alexander* having run many hazards in war, turned himself to his souldiers, and said, *What pains have I taken, what dangers have I undergone, only to be praised and cryed up by you?* As many in their worldly actings aime only at their own praise, so do this sort of hypocrites in their spiritual and holy actings; they pray, and hear, and deal about their almes for applause with men. What the Historian writes of the Camelion, is most true of them, they live by the ayre, and are fed with the vapours of an earthly praise.

Secondly, Others (most of all the mighty, of whom *Elihu* is discoursing) act for God in the out-side of Religion, to get an opportunity of revenge upon men; they put on a fair shew of godliness, that they may have a fairer advantage to let out their malice, and vent their spleen. When either a real or supposed injury, falls upon an inapotent and impatient spirit; malice will provoke to give that back which charity teacheth to forgive. The tyrannie of this passion gives no rest to the discontented soul; all methods shall be studied, and stratagems devised to content hatred by the compassing of revenge; and when common projects fail, the habit of zeal and religion shall be put on, that the conceived malice may be let out: Such a man will cloath himself with the garments of piety, that he may cover the instruments of cruelty, and do a mischief unsuspected. *Saul* was a hypocrite, and false with God, yet how did he encourage *David* to follow the War, and *fight the Lord's battels* against the uncircumcised Philistines;

(1 *Sam.*

(1 Sam. 18. 17.) whereas *Saul* sought not the honour of God at all, nor the overthrow of the Philistines, so much, as the overthrow of *David*; his intent was to take his own revenge upon *David*, rather then Gods revenge on them: for he hoped *David* would one time or other over-act his valour against the Philistines, and lose his life, to win honour and reputation. How religiously did *Abner* (who was a great Prince as *David* called him) urge the promise of God to make *David* King, (2 Sam. 3. 18.) and yet 'tis plain in the Text, that his designe was to revenge himself upon *Ishbosheth*, who had put (as he thought) an affront upon him, rather then to be instrumental for the fulfilling of the promise of God to *David*. *Jezebel* a great Queen proclaimed a Fast (which is one of the highest acts of Religion) while her purpose was only to get an opportunity to feast her self upon the destruction of *Naboth*, and to drink his innocent blood. *Herod* a King (Matth. 2. 8.) desired to have the young childe Christ, that he might come and worship him, but his designe was to murder him; and because he could not have his will to kill him alone, he resolved to kill him in the multitude, commanding all the infants of such an age to be slain, lest he should escape. We have a sad instance of this in two of the Patriarchs, (Gen. 34.) I do not say they were hypocrites, but, I say, they acted a high strain of hypocrisy, and put on a religious pretence for the compassing of revenge. *Dinah*, *Jacob*s daughter being deflowred by *Shechem*, he sued to have her for his wife, and would wipe off the stain of his lust by a legal marriage; old *Hamor* pleaded for his son, and *Jacob* was willing enough ('tis like) to save the credit of his daughter; but the sons of *Jacob* answered *Shechem* and *Hamor* his father deceitfully (v. 13.) and they said, we cannot match with you, except you be circumcised, and so become Profelytes to our Religion. If *Shechem* will be of their family, he must be of their faith; they stood not upon their sisters joynture, the matter stuck only upon a scruple of conscience. What argument of greater zeal for God could they have given then this? Yet while these religious words were in their mouths, they had bloody swords in their hearts: And all this pretence for circumcision, was only that they might have an advantage, to come upon them in their foreness and destroy them; which (as the holy story tells us) they soon after effected.

Thirdly, Hypocrites often designe worldly gain, and ayme at
the

the purse more then at God in all their holy services. Many take up a profession of Religion, as all men take up a Trade, *that they may get a Living by it*; the Apostle speaks of such (1 Tim. 6.5.) who suppose *that gain is godliness*; whereas he saith (vers. 6.) *Godliness with contentment is great gain*, they say, *Gain is godliness*; And all they look at by their profession of godliness, is worldly gain. Religion is often made (as the Apostles word is, 1 Thess. 2. 5.) *a cloak of covetousness*; and he professeth in the same place, that in the dispensation of the Gospel, he had not used his Ministry as such a cloak, God was his witness; but there are many against whom (though men cannot) yet their own consciences do, and God will witness, that their appearance in Religion is but the hiding of, or a cloak for their covetousness. *Hamor and Shechem* used no other argument to perswade their Citizens to take upon them the seal of the Covenant, but only this, *Shall not their cattle, and their substance, and every beast of theirs, be ours?* (Gen. 34. 27.) And it seems the very mention of their own emolument overcame them; they thought it a bargain well made, to sell a little of their blood at so high a rate, and to exchange their fore-skins for so many head of Cattel. And hence it is, that among those seven sorts of Pharisees collected out of the Talmud, the first are called *Pharisei Shechemita*, receiving (it seems) both their Order and Denomination from these Shechemites, because as they turned Hebrewes, so these became Pharisees upon the hopes of worldly benefit. And such were those Pharisees in truth, whatsoever their Title was, *who* (as was touched before) *devoured widows houses, and in a pretence made long prayers*. As it is a very great point of ungodliness (prophaneness indeed) to say, *What profit is there in serving the Lord?* So it is gross hypocrisie to take up Religion meerly for profit; there is profit, even worldly profit in Religion; *Godliness is profitable for all things*, (1 Tim. 4.8.) *and hath the promise of this life as well as of that to come*; but woe to those that take it up designing profit, and the filling either of their purses, or their bellies. Our Saviours Divine Spirit quickly discovered this carnal spirit in his followers, (John 6. 26.) *Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled*; Judas followed Christ, but the motive of it, was in the bag, (John 12. 6.) The zeal of *Demetrius* to his Idol *Diana*, was kindled by as pure a fire as the zeal of these hypocrites

pocrites to Jeſus Chriſt, (*Acts* 19. 24.) *By this we get our living.* They know nothing of the life of Religion, who are religious only that they may live: If profit be the Loadſtone of our profeſſion, our profeſſion will never profit us; for what ſhall it profit a man to gain the whole world by a profeſſion of the name of Chriſt, if he loſe his own ſoul? Satan charged *Job* with this groſs hypocriſie, (*chap.* 1. 9.) *Doth Job fear God for nought?* as if he had ſaid, *Job* findes 'tis no lean buſineſs to be religious, and therefore no wonder if he be found ſo religious. Who would not do and be as much as he in Religion, to have his fields full of Cattel, and his folds full of Sheep, and his houſe full of Riches? He knows well enough which ſide his bread is buttered on, what makes for his profit; all the account he makes of Religion is, that he perceives by his books, and the inventory of his goods, that it turns every year to a good account: *Jobs* ſlander is the juſt charge of many, they uſe Religion but as a ſtalking horſe, to catch worldly riches.

Fourthly, The groſſe hypocrite often deſignes, that which is higher in the eſteeme, and more taking upon the ſpirits of many then worldly riches, even worldly power, or to get very high, if not uppermoſt in the world. 'Tis no new thing for men to make religion a ſtayre to aſcend the higheſt roomes among men, or a ſtirrup to get into the ſaddle of honour, and when they have got high enough, then downe with the ſtayres, or 'tis no matter for the ſtirrup by which they aſcended. *Jehu* was very zealous in the cauſe of God, and for reſormation, but his deſigne was for a kingdome, or his owne exaltation (*2 Kings* 10. 16.) he made a noyſe of much piety, *Come ſee my zeale for the Lord*, yet all was but a piece of State-hypocriſie. His care in deſtroying *Ahabs* houſe and *Baals* Priests (according to the command of God) was but to pave the way to the throne. The ſame way *Absolom* was taking to his fathers Crowne; he told the people he was troubled that they were no better governed, that they had no quicker diſpatch in their ſuites and buſineſſes; he told his father he had made a vow, and deſired the liberty of his abſence from Court, that he might goe and performe it; all he pretended was righteouſneſſe and religion, yet he intended only to get an advantage to make his parry ſtrong, that ſo he might thruſt his father out of the throne, and get up himſelfe. He ſeemed a Saint while he meant to be a Traytor. The Hiſtory of the Church reports of *Julian the Apoſtata*.

Socrates Hist: Ap^ostate, that when his predecessor (being a Christian) held the
 E. clefiast: Empire, he highly pretended the profession of Christ, and read
 lib: 3. c. 1. a Gospel-Lecture in the Church of *Nichomedia*; yet while he was
 in shew a Christian, and in hope an Emperour, he was in heart a
 pagan. He saw the times served him not to act the pagan openly,
 and therefore he subtly betooke himselfe to his disguise, and
 personated the Christian, even in the mortified way of a mona-
 sticke life, that he might smooth his way to the Empire. To which
 having once attained, he presently put off his disguise, and, to his
 utmost, disgraced and opposed the name and faith of Christ, which
 he had formerly owned and professed.

τάτε δὲ καὶ
 τὸν ὑποκριτὴν
 τῷ Χριστιανί-
 ζειν παρωπῶς
 ἀπεδοῦντο.
 Tandem simul-
 tionem professi-
 onis christiana
 penitus deposu-
 it. Socrat: ubi
 supra.

Thus I have touch't upon the foure grand designs of the
 Grosse hypocrite: First, praise among all men; Secondly, revenge
 upon some men; Thirdly, the gaine of worldly riches; Fourthly,
 the attainment of power, dominion, and Greatness in the world.
 These are as the foure wheelles of Satans chariot, wherein he hur-
 rieth thousandes to the land of darkness, while they would be esteem-
 ed children of the light. Or some one of these is as the (*primum mobile*) first mover (of which Philosophers speake in their
 doctrine of the heavens) carrying many with a rapt and violent
 motion in the spheare of religion, while they have in the Interim
 a secret undiscerned natural motion of their owne directly oppo-
 site to this, by which they hope at last to steale on faire and softly
 to their wished periods.

Having thus farre shewed the close purposes of the designing
 hypocrite, who is so hatefull to God and hurtfull to man, I shall
 a little discover and unmaske his hypocrisie, by shewing how we
 may know him, how we may looke through these vayles and see
 his ugly face.

Designing hypocrites are usually discovered these foure wayes.

First, By their affectation to be seene and taken notice of;
 they that will have praise and glory with men, must needs affect
 to be seene of men; for no glory comes to man, from men, but
 by what falls under the eye and observation of man. *Job* saith of
murderers (Chap: 24. 13.) *They are of those that rebell against*
the light, they know not the wayes thereof, nor abide in the paths
thereof. The murderer cannot endure the light either natural or
 moral, because that tells who he is, or what he hath been about.
 The contrary, in one sense, is true of the hypocrite, he loveth the
 light,

light, and will doe nothing willingly, but as he may be taken notice of, and ſeene of men ; as for thoſe acts or exerciſes of religion, which are private retirements between God and his owne ſoule, he is a great ſtranger to them, he cannot delight in them, but any thing that may fall under publick obſervation, he can be forward enough in. Chriſt (*Math. 6. 5.*) gives us this plaine diſcovery of the hypocricall Pharifees ; *They love to pray ſtanding in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the ſtreets, that they may be ſeene of men.* This was ſo much in *Jehu's* heart, that he could not but blab it out with his tongue (*2 Kings 10.*) *Come ſee my zeale* ; A falſe fire kindled his zeale, elſe he had not made ſuch a blaze. It was, inſincere rotten-hearted *Saul* that ſayd (*1 Sam. 15. 13.*) *Come thou bleſſed of the Lord, I have performed the commandement of the Lord* ; he was his owne trumpeter, and would needs tell the ſtory of his doings himſelfe, though he had done his buſineſſe to halves ; *Come thou bleſſed of the Lord, I have performed the commandement of the Lord* ; as if it would not ſerve him to doe his duty, unleſſe *Samuel* had ſeene and taken notice of him. *Abraham* gave prooſe of the higheſt act of faith that ever was in the world, yet did *Abraham* ſay, *Come ſee my faith* ? *Moses* led the people of *Iſrael* forty yeares in the wildeſſe through a ſeries of wonderfull tryalls and temptations, to the very borders of *Canaan* (which was one of the higheſt ſervices that ever man undertook) and was faithfull in all his houſe (*Heb. 4. 2.*) yet did he ſay, *Come ſee my fideliti* ? *Joſhua* victoriously expelled the *Cananites*, and divided their land by lot among the tribes of *Iſrael*, yet did he ſay, *Come ſee my fortitude* ? We heare not a word of any of their doings from thoſe who were ſincere. When we ſee men forward to invite the approbation of others by making reports of their good deeds, it gives a ſtrong argument of ſuſpicion, that they have done what they have done with a bad heart, or, that (as it is ſayd of *Jehu*) *they have not ſought God with all their hearts.*

But ſome may object, Did not *Samuel* proclaime his own integrity before all the people (*1 Sam. 12. 3.*) *Whoſe ox have I taken ? or whoſe aſſe have I taken ? or whom have I defrauded ? whom have I oppreſſed ? or of whoſe hand have I received any bribe, to blind mine eyes therewith ?*

I answer ; *Samuel* ſpake this to upbraid their ingratitude and

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discontent, not to extoll his owne justice; yea some conceive that he made this challenge, to give *Saul* a patterne how he ought to governe, rather then to commend his owne government. I find the Apostle *Paul* making large reports of his owne both doings and sufferings (*2 Cor: 11.*) But if we peruse that Chapter, we shall find him hovering in a suspence of doubts and feares, whether or no it were convenient or comely for him to doe so. How many preambles and Apologies did he make before he fell directly upon that unpleasing subject? *Would to God ye could beare with me in my folly* (saith he) *and indeed beare with me.* And againe, *I speake* (as it were) *foolishly in this confidence of boasting.* And yet all that he spake was not to make a boast of himselfe, but to vindicate his Apostleship from unjust and envious calumniation.

'Tis most certaine, He that is sincere desires not to be open, but silently satisfieth his soule with the conscience of doing his duty, and takes more content, in knowing his own integrity, then in knowing that others know it. Vertue looseth nothing of her value, in his esteeme, no nor of her lustre in his eye, because she is hidden from the eyes of men. Like the earth (in this poynt) he keeps his richest mineralls, and most precious gems of grace and goodness below in his bowells, or at the center of his heart, and will not let them be seene, till a kind of necessity diggs them out. When *Moses* after his forty dayes neere access to and communion with God in the Mount, perceived that his face did shine (*Exod: 34. 33.*) he put a vayle upon it; every true *Moses* whose acquaintance and fiduciall familiarity with God, hath stampt upon him the impressions of divine light, is so farre from affecting to dazzle the eyes of others with it, that he rather puts a vayle of gracious modesty upon it; and will not let so much as the light of his good workes be seene, but as thereby (in which case Christ commands it (*Math: 5. 16.*) *He may glorifie his father which is in heaven.* And herein a Christian followeth the example of Christ, in whom though the Godhead dwelt bodily, yet he rarely shewed his divine power. And when once by a miracle, he had made the blind see, he also by command made them dumbe concerning that miracle (*Math: 9. 30.*) *See that no man know it.* It was our Saviours counsel to all his followers (*Mat: 6. 5.*) *Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doth,* and it was his
 conso-

consolation to them in the next words ; *Your father which seeth in secret, himselfe shall reward you openly* ; yea (which is a higher consolation then that) *Himselfe will be your reward.*

Secondly , As the designing hypocrite desires to be seene in doing good, or to have the good which he hath done seene ; so he is exceeding censorious and rigid towards those whom he sees falling into evill. Christ gives this discovery also (*Math. 7. 3.*) *Why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brothers eye, but considerest not the beame that is in thine owne eye* ; concluding at the 5th verse ; *Thou hypocrite* (why doth Christ call him hypocrite ? surely because he was so quick-sighted to see a mote, that is, a smaller fault in his brothers eye , but tooke no notice of the beame that was in his owne eye ; a spot upon his brothers coate, was censured more by him, then his owne wallowing in the mire. I doe not say that the Patriarke *Judah* was an hypocrite, but, as these two other Patriarke, so he acted one very grosse part of hypocrisie (*Gen. 38. 24.*) For he no sooner heard that *Tamar* was with childe, but he censured, yea condemn'd her presently to death ; *Bring her forth* (sayd he) *and let her be burnt* ; and yet himselfe was more faulty then she. How hard a Judge was he of that crime in another, which was principally his owne ? *Saul* had sinned greatly (*1 Sam. 13. 9.*) in offering sacrifice before *Samuel* came, which was an usurpation of the Priests office, and so great a sin that *Samuel* told him presently, *God would therefore rend the Kingdome from him* ; yet he thought to put it off with a slight excuse. But in the 14th Chapter when *Jonathan* only offended against a rash command of his (putting a Curse upon that people if any did eate before the going downe of the Sun) he sentenced him to death for it. In the 8th of *John*, How severe were the Pharisees to the woman taken in Adultery , they haled her before Christ, and pressed the Law that she should be stoned to death ; yet, when Christ sayd (*v. 7.*) *He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her, they being convicted by their owne conscience, went out one by one.* We ought to reprove and not flatter sin in others ; yet they who are extreameley severe against a sin in others, usually favour either the same or a worse in themselves. He that is sincere , pittieeth others, as much as reproves them, and he reproves them , though with sharpness, yet with meekness, at once considering himselfe, lest he also be tempted (*Gal. 6. 1.*) and blessing God who hath

kept him in or from these temptations.

Thirdly, The designing hypocrite discovers himselfe by laying downe or departing from the profession of religion, when his worldly ends are attained. Feined zeale cooles or abates, is lesse and lesse towards the things of God, as such zelors grow warmer and warmer in their nests, and find their carnal interests more and more served or secured. 'Tis reported by a Popish Author, that a Fryar or Monke was observed very precise, and circumspect in all his wayes, hanging downe his head to the earth, very humbly and devoutly, as if he meditated continually upon his mortality, or returne to the earth; who afterwards being chosen Abbot or Governour of the Covent, grew very proud, high and insolent. Some, wondring at this change of behaviour, tooke the boldness to aske him the reason of it; O, said he, *I was but seeking the keyes of the Abbey, and now I have found them.* Having gotten what he sought for, he layd aside his strictness in religion, and threw off his vayne. When *Jehu* that hypocrite was in his way to the Kingdome, how zealous was he? yet no sooner settled in it, but he was unsetled in religion, & turned Idolater, worshipping the Calves that were in *Dan* and *Bethel*. When *Julian* had obtained the Empire, he had done with Christ, and gave all the world a full argument against himselfe, that he was but a hypocrite in his former profession of Christianity. *David* was as zealous for God and as holy when he was upon the throne, as when he kept sheepe upon the Mountaines, as good when a princely traine followed him, as when he followed the Ewes great with young. *Moses* was as faithfull when he was the ruler of *Israel*, as when he was an exile in *Midian*. *Joseph* was as gracious when he wore a chaine of Gold, and had the power of all *Egypt* put into his hand, as when himselfe was a prisoner in *Potiphers* house, and the iron (chaines) entred into his soule. *I feare God* (sayd he, *Gen. 42. 18.*) when he had no man to feare. And when after his fathers death, his brethren feared he would reckon with them for their old faults, or at least be carelesse of and unkind to them, who had been so unkind and cruel to him, yet he would doe them nothing but kindneses and courtesies, and thereof bid them be confident, (*Gen. 50. 21.*)

Fourthly, As successe discovereth some hypocrites, so the crosse discovereth many more. The hypocrite will run from his colours.

colours when he comes to the battel, or seeth he must either quit the truths of God, or his owne peace. If once he findeth that he cannot thrive by religion, he will meddle no more with it. There is a generation who will appeare no further for truth, then serves their owne turne ; and when they see they cannot serve that, by holding the truth, they will neither hold nor professe it any longer. They will venter no further in such matters, then they may make a faire retreat, if they see themselves in danger, or cannot carry onne their owne interestts. Thus the second ground is described (*Math: 13. 20, 21.*) *He that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it ; yet hath he not roote in himselfe, but dureth for a while, for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended.* He hath enough of the word, when he seeth he cannot have that, and enough of the world too. Many will get aboard the ship of the true Church in a calme, who if they see the clouds gather, the ayre darken, the winds rising, the storme coming, they dare not ride it out in an angry Sea, but will be calling for the boate, and row to the next shoare. These never purposed to endure all winds and weathers, with the Church of God, but hoped to be transported to the *cape of their worldly good hope, and wished for earthly haven.* Their flight interprets their intents, and lists them among designing hypocrites. The house founded on the sand, sheweth as faire in a faire day, as that founded on a rocke ; But when the raine descends, and the flouds come, and the winds blow, you may distinguish it, by the down-fall. He was never more nor better then a meere out-side professor, who doth not hold fast his profession in a day of trouble as well as in a day of peace ; in the greatest distresse, as well as in the highest successe and triumph of the people of God in this world.

To shut up this poynt and observation, I shall only give three or foure considerations, which may move all to take heed of hypocrisie. Christ saith (*Luke 12. 1.*) *Beware of the Leaven of the Pharisees which is hypocrisie.* As Leaven sowres the whole lump of bread, so doth hypocrisie both the persons and conversations of those who are infected with it.

First, Beware of hypocrisie, or of hiding what you are, for what you are, doth alwayes appeare to God, though not to men ; *All things are naked and manifest unto the eyes of him with whom*

we have to doe (Heb: 4. 13.) though we are painted over, though we are cloaked, and hooded, and vizarded with pretences, yet we are naked before the eye of God. And that was the argument with which God pressed *Abraham* to beware of hypocrisie (*Gen: 17. 1.*) *Walke before me and be thou perfect*; that is, remember thou art alwayes in my eye and sight, therefore take heed of fallienesse and insincerity. We use to say, *There is no halting before a Cripple*; Criples know whether yours be a fained or reall lameness. O take heed of halting before God, he knoweth how it is with you, he knoweth the temper of your soules, as well as the body of your conversations; he doth not only know what you doe, but with what aimes, with what heart and purpose you doe it. *Paul* sayd (*1 Thes. 2. 5.*) *We have not used a cloake of covetousnesse, God is witnesse*. As if he had sayd, God will quickly see through us, and find out our covetousnesse, though we cover it with never so thicke or faire a cloake of devotional professions.

Secondly, Consider, as the Lord seeth through you, so he will make you thoroughly seene, he will make you knowne or unmaske you before men one time or other. As he will *bring forth the righteousnesse of a godly man as the light* (after it hath been long hid under the darknesse of uncharitable suspitions or false accusations) *and his just dealing as the noone day*, (*Plal: 37. 6.*) so he will bring forth the unrighteousnesse of a hypocrite as the light, and his false-dealing as the noone-day, though it have layne hid a while under the cloake and faire colours of the most pious semblances and protestations. God loves to uncase hypocrites, because he is a God of truth; and because it magnifieth his truth, justice, and omniscience to do so. And he doth it many times, by letting them fall into foule sins; they make faire shewes in religion, through restraining grace, and as soone as that bridle of restraining grace is let loose, that very shew is gone, and they shew plainly what they are. *The closest designing hypocrites, often prove open Apostates*; and though some may abide long, (possibly as long as they live) in this vaine shew or forme of Godliness, without discovering their rottenness, yet at last their rottenness shall be discovered: for as *Solomon* assureth us (*Eccles: 12. 14.*) *God will bring every worke to Judgement, and every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evill*. Or as the Apostle hath it, (*1 Cor: 4. 5.*)

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He will discover the secrets of the heart, and bring to light the hidden things of darknesse; which, what are they, but the hypocritical delings of men? We say, *murder will out*, and 'tis as true, *Hypocrisie will out*. The Lord many times brings it out to the shame of hypocrites in this life, and he will bring it out to the confusion of all their faces, in that great day, when the secrets of all hearts shall be revealed.

Thirdly, Take heed of this designing hypocrisie; for as all who continue in it shall be discovered, so usually they continue in it; your plotting cunning hypocrites, are very rarely converted. Simple hypocrites (in the notion toucht before) are often converted; all unconverted persons that make any profession in religion are hypocrites, and many of them are simple ones, they hope all is well with them, and that they have grace, though they have it not, these are often converted, but gross designing hypocrites, of what rank or degree soever, are rarely converted. This is it which Christ said to the Pharisees, (*Matth. 21. 31.*) *Publicans and Harlots enter into the Kingdome of heaven before you*; Publicans were the worst sort of men, and harlots were the worst sort of women, yet these repented and received the Gospel sooner then the hypocritical Pharisees. The Evangelist made a like report of them (*Luke 7. 29, 30.*) *All the people (that is, the common sort of people) that heard him, and the Publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptisme of John, but the Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him*; yea, as Christ speaks in the next words, they were piped to, but they would not dance; they were wept to, but they would not mourne. All those various dispensations of the Gospel were fruitless to them; neither a more pleasing nor a more severe Ministry won any thing upon that generation of designing hypocrites.

Fourthly, consider, As hypocrites are hateful to God, so God will deal with them accordingly; he will for ever separate them from his presence, and cast them out of his sight. A hypocrite hath a double minde, a divided heart; he is not half enough for God, (indeed he is nothing at all for God) and he is too much, yea altogether for himself, and therefore he shall have nothing at all of God, nor so much as a sight of him. It is said in the 13th of Job, *The hypocrite shall not come before him*: Such as we hate,
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we cannot endure they should come in our sight : 'Tis a futable judgement, that they who have so often come before God with false hearts, and mocked him with a seeming desire of being in his presence, should at last be thrust for ever out of his presence. 'Tis the portion of an hypocrite to have no portion in God, of whom he hath made such a boasting profession. When the worst of punishments is spoken of, it is called the hypocrites portion (*Math: 24. 51.*) *Give them their portion with hypocrites in the Lake that burnes with fire and brimstone.* Hypocrites are spoken of as if they were the free-holders of hell, or as if all other sinners that shall goe to hell were but as inmates, and they the grand tenants of hell. Consider how miserable a thing it is to be an hypocrite, if this be the portion of hypocrites, to have no portion in God. And as they shall not reigne at all in the glory of the next world, so they are sometimes checkt (saith the text) from reigning in the glory of this world.

That the hypocrite reigne not.

Reigning, as was shewed before, being strictly taken, is the exercise of supream power, and in a large sense may signifie the exercise of any power, or a state of great prosperity.

Hence note, Secondly.

Hypocrites are high minded, and look after great things.

David was a king, he reigned over *Israel*, but it was not his owne ambition, but the election of God, and his anointing, which brought him to the throne. He could say of himselfe (*Psal: 131. 1.*) *Lord my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty: neither doe I exercise my selfe in great matters, or in things too high for me.* Though David was high in his person and state, yet his spirit was not high; nor was his spirit for high things, only God placed him on high. But here we see the hypocrite is climbing and getting to the top of the staires, he is ascending even to the throne. *Hypocrites are proud of that nothing which they have and are in spiritualls, and they would have all, they would get high, they would be highest in temporalls.* There are two lusts which usually reigne in hypocrites, and both of them respect the world.

First, The lust of covetousnesse, which is an inordinate desire of getting and keeping the riches of this world. The Pharisees all
the

the Gospel over are taxed for hypocrites; and when Christ had preached that parable of the unjust Steward, concluding with this sentence, *Ye cannot serve God and Mammon*; The Evangelist telleth us (Luke 16. 14.) *The Pharisees also who were covetous, heard all these things, and they derided him.* Covetousnesse and hypocrisie goe together; They who have no true hungriings and thirstings after the things of heaven, are most hungry and thirsty after earthly things. We finde *Job* in the 27th Chapter of this Booke (v. 8.) speaking of the hypocrites gaine; *What is the hope of the hypocrite, though he hath gained, when God taketh away his soule*; which implyeth that the hypocrite is a great aimor at worldly gaine.

The second predominant lust of the hypocrite is, ambition, or desire of getting to the upper end of the world. Christ chargeth the hypocriticall Pharisees with this lust also (Mathe 23. 6. Mark 12. 39.) *They love the uppermost roomes at feasts, and the highest seats in the Synagogues.* They are all to be uppermost, they must have the uppermost roomes at feasts, and the highest seats in the Synagogue, both in Civill and Church-meetings, hypocrites affected superiority, or, *Diotrephes*-like, to have the preheminance, and (which was another symptome of ambition) *they* (saith Christ) *love greetings in the market place, and to be called Rabbi, Rabbi*, which is a title of greatness and mastership. Yea many hypocrites would not only have the uppermost seats at feasts, and in the Synagogues, but the very uppermost seats in Nations & Common-wealths; *They sometimes affect to be the head, who are worse then the taylor of all the people.* There are hypocrites of all ranks, and among all degrees of men, some of low degree are in a very high degree of hypocrisie; There are hypocrites in raggs and in russet, there are hypocrites also in scarlet and in purple; hypocrisie may reigne in and among those that reigne. It is a maxime which some Princes have held out to all the world, as the rule of their reigning; *He that knoweth not how to dissemble, Qui nescit dissimulare nescit regnare.* Dissimulation is a great part of hypocrisie, there is dissimulation both as to the things of God, and the things of men; Some if they knew not how to dissemble in both (at least) with men, would not believe that they knew how to rule over, or governe men. Now as many who are great, and in power, make little conscience to dissemble, or make use of hypocrisie, to carry

on their government, and secure themselves ; so most hypocrites have a mind, and will use all meanes (not forbearing those which are bad enough) to get into power, and make themselves great. The spirit of hypocrisie is an aspiring spirit.

Againe , *Elihu* saith, *That the hypocrite reigne not, lest the people be ensnared* ; here's not one word of the good government or protection of the people, which should be the maine businesse of those that reigne ; The text speaks only of snares ; *That the hypocrite reigne not, lest the people be ensnared.*

Hence observe ; Thirdly.

Hypocrites getting into power, doe either secretly or openly wrong and oppresse the people.

They lay snares for them in stead of being shields to them. Hypocrites in power, ensnare chiefly two wayes.

Regis ad exemplum totius componitur orbis.

First, By their ill example, there is a great snare in that ; Inferiours are very apt to be formed up according to their mould and manners who are above them ; the example of Kings and Princes are seldome unconformed to by their Subjects. There is a great power in example, what is done perswades, as well as what is spoken. And *the errors of those that rule, become rules of error* ; men sin with a kind of authority, through the sins of those who are in authority. *Jeroboam made Israel to sin*, not only by commanding them to worship the Calves at *Dan* and *Bethel*, but by commending that Idolatous worship to them in his owne practise and example.

Secondly , They ensnare the people by sinfull and bad Lawes ; The Prophet denounceth a woe distinctly unto men of severall ranks and places (*Hos: 5. 1.*) *Heare ye this, O Priests, and hearken ye house of Israel, and give ye eare, O house of the King*; he directs his speech, in that three-fold division ; First, to the Priests ; Secondly, to the body of the people ; Thirdly, and chiefly to the house of the King , why to the house of the King ? *Because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor.* That Scripture may be interpreted ; First, as an allusion to such as were wont to hunt upon those mountaines ; *Mizpah* and *Tabor* were famous places for hunting, there they were wont to set netts, and lay snares to catch their game ; now, saith the Prophet, ye have been even like hunters spreading netts and laying snares, *Nimrod* is called

called a *mighty hunter before God*; He was a hunter of men more then of wild beasts. Now, look what nets and snares are to wild beasts, the same are sinfull lawes to the consciences of honest and upright-hearted men. And it is wel conceived that the Prophet there referrs to those ensnaring Lawes made by *Jeroboam* and the succeeding Princes in the Kingdome of *Israel*, whereby they endeavoured to draw off the people of God from his true worship, and vexed those who kept close to it. Secondly, some expound those words, *Ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor*, to signifie their setting spies upon those mountaines to watch and so to give information, who went to the solemne feasts, that so they might be proceeded against according to those ensnaring Lawes. Which way soever we take it, 'tis cleare, that Scripture reproves and threatens Judgement against the Priests and Apostatizing people of *Israel*, complying with if not provoking the the ruling powers to trouble those who could not digest the Idolatrous worship set up by *Jeroboam* at *Dan & Bethel*, upon a politique consideration, lest the people going to *Jerusalem*, should fall off from him, and weaken the kingdome of *Israel* in his hand. Another Prophet complained (*Mic. 6. 16.*) *The Statutes of Omri are kept.* *Omri* was a king of *Israel*, a successor of *Jeroboam* both in his power and hypocrisie, he also pretended a zeale for the worship of God after his owne devising, and therefore made ensnaring Statutes to entangle those that were sincere, and persevered in the true worship which the Statutes of God appoynted. The Prophet speakes of a strange kind of bridle, or of a bridle used for an unusuall purpose (*Isa. 30. 28.*) *There shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people causing them to erre.* A bridle is put upon the head of a horse or mule, as *David* speaks (*Psal. 32. 9.*) not to cause either to erre or goe out of the way, but to keep them in the way. 'Tis evident by the context of this Chapter, as also by the expresse text of the 37th Chapter (*v. 29.*) that this bridle was the Lords power against *Senacharib* and his host, whereby as with a bridle in their jaws he diverted them from their purpose of besieging *Jerusalem*. 'Tis a truth also (to which we may warrantably enough apply those words of the Prophet in a way of allusion) that good lawes are like a bridle in the jaws of a people, the multitude or the most would else be like headstrong horses, if authority did not keep them in. 'Tis a great mer-

cy when Laws are as a bridle to keep us from erring, but 'tis ſad when *any Lawes are a bridle in the jawes of a people cauſing them to erre*, or go out of the way of the Laws of God ; ſuch Laws are not (which all Lawes ſhould be) rules, but ſnares. Such were the Lawes of *Jeroboam*, and the Statutes of *Omri* in Iſrael of old ; and what Nation is there that hath not had experience in one age, or other, of ſuch Lawes as have been a bridle in their jawes cauſing them to erre, or a ſnare to their ſouls and conſciences ?

Fourthly, When *Elihu* ſaith, *That the hypocrite reigne not, leſt the people be enſnared*, he intends an act of divine wrath, upon hypocrites, abuſing their power to the hurt of the people.

Hence Note.

God is highly diſpleaſed with Princes and Magiſtrates when they enſnare the people.

We read (*Iſa. 3. 12.*) how the people of Iſrael were enſnared, and how the Lord was highly diſpleaſed with thoſe who did enſnare them. *O my people, they which lead thee, cauſe thee to erre, and deſtroy the way of thy paths.* Thy Leaders miſlead thee. There are two ſorts of Leaders, Firſt, Spiritual Leaders ; the Miniſters and Preachers of the Word now, as of old the Priests, Levites, and Prophets, were Leaders of the people (and ſometimes proved their miſleaders, *Jer. 23. 13.*) in Spirituals. Secondly, There are Leaders of the people in Civil things ; ſuch are all Princes and Magiſtrates. We may underſtand that Text in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, of both theſe Leaders ; as if he had ſaid, *Thy Prophets and thy Princes miſlead thee, and cauſe thee to erre*; And therefore at *ver. 14.* of the ſame chapter, God declareth his diſpleaſure againſt them, profeſſing that he would *enter into judgement with the An-cients of his people, and the Princes thereof.* The ſame Prophet *Iſaiah* (*chap. 9. 16.*) complains of the ſame thing again ; *The Leaders of this people cauſe them to erre, and they that are lead of them are deſtroyed.* The Hebrew is, *they that bleſs this people*, (ſo we put it in the margin,) The Leaders of the people were ſo called, either becauſe it was a part of their office, to pronounce the bleſſing upon the people ; or becauſe the falſe Prophets uſed to ſooth up the people in their ſins ; and (as another Prophet hath it) to ſow pillows under their elbows, as if they were in a very bleſſed condition, and ſhould do well enough, notwithſtand-
ing

ing all the clamours of the true Prophets against them. And so the latter words, *they that are led of them*, are suitable to the former in the Hebrew, being thus read in the margin, *they that are called blessed of them*; that is, declared or assured by them to be in the right way, and so such as should come to a blessed end, though indeed their end proved destruction. And if they who are misled (or called blessed) fall into destruction, surely their misleaders (who call them blessed) shall not escape. *If the blinde lead the blinde, both fall into the ditch*, (Matth. 15. 14.) only the blinde leader, or misleader, shall fall deepest into it.

Fifthly, Observe.

As God is displeased with the hypocrite when he useth his power to ensnare the people, so the Lord sometimes puts him besides his power, or takes his power from him, that he may no longer ensnare the people.

The ultimate scope of the place, is not only to shew the Lord displeased with the hypocrite, but displacing him. When the Prophet had summon'd all sorts, Priests, and people, and the house of the King, he addes, *Judgement is towards you, because ye have been a snare upon Mizpah*, (Hos. 5. 1.) Thus as God pulls down hypocrites, because they are hateful to himself, so because they are hurtful to others; hurtful to their Civil Liberties, and worldly Interests, over which God is tender; hurtful also to their spiritual Liberties, and soul Interests, over which God is more tender. The Kings of Israel (who were very wicked, and did much ensnare the people) went off their Governments, most of them, very speedily, God did not let them reigne long; yea, the whole Kingdom of Israel (which had not one good King) was dissolved long before the Kingdom of Judah, which had many good Kings. God did not suffer the hypocritical Kings of Israel to hold their power, but gave them into the hand of the King of Assyria, (2 Kings 17. 6.) because (vers. 8.) *they walked in the statutes of the heathen, and of the Kings of Israel, which they had made.*

From the whole verse I would give one Note by way of Corroary.

A hypocrite is of all persons most unfit for publick service.

How unfit is he to have power in his hand, who can use it no better,

better, then for the ensnaring of the people? A hypocrite is of a private spirit, he is all for himself, and therefore most unfit for publick trust. We may say of the hypocrite, as the Prophet (*Ezek. 15. 3.*) of the Vine, *Shall wood be taken thereof to do any work? or, will men take a pin of it, to hang a vessel thereon?* No, it is not fit for that mean purpose or service, much less would a man take a Vine to hew a beam or a pillar for a house out of it. Magistrates are as pillars of the house, or like great beams, to hold up and fasten all; the hypocrite is so far from being fit Timber to make a pillar of the house, that he is not fit to make a pin to hang a vessel on upon the wall. *Power is never so improperly employed as in making snares*, and yet that's the usual employment or improvement which hypocrites, high or low, put it to.

Qui regnare facit hominem hypocritam propter offensa-
cula populi.

Vulg. Constituens regem hominem delatorem propter scandala quæ in populo.
Chald.

Non sunt ita repugnantes hæc interpretationes, quin una ex altera consequatur. Nam si non finit Deus diuini regnare certe aliquandiu finit; dat enim reges in iram. Merl.

I have thus far opened the Text, and given these Notes from it, according to our reading; yet before I pass from it, I shall minde you of another reading or version of this whole verse, which carryeth the sence quite into another channel. Thus

Who (meaning God) maketh (or suffereth at least) the hypocrite to reigne, because of the offenses or sins of the people. The Chaldee Paraphrase, the Septuagint, and Vulgar Latine agree in this, and the dependance (for clearing of it) may be made out thus.

Elihu having shewed in the 29th verse, that if God giveth quietness, none can make trouble; and that if he hideth his face, none can behold him, whether it be done against a Nation, or against a man only, proceeds in this verse to shew the justice of God in punishing the people, by putting power into the hypocrites hand.

The learned *Mercer*, I grant, is not satisfied with this rendering, as not being so futable to the Grammatical construction of the Hebrew Text; yet, holding the first, he makes this as a consequent of it; confessing that it may be taken in this sence; *That the hypocrite reigne not who did once reigne, because of the sins of the people*; and so it intimates the sins both of the Prince and people. Thus both readings correspond, and are not repugnant but subservient to each other. For if God suffer not the hypocrite to reigne any longer, 'tis an argument that for a time he suffered him to reigne for the sins of the people, that is, to be an instrument of his wrath and vengeance upon them for their sins. The same word signifies both a *snare*, and sin; a snare set by others, and an offence or sin committed by our selves; and well it may, seeing

seeing nothing doth more ensnare us then our own sins. And as some are led into sin by the snares which others lay for them; so very many by sinning bring themselves into snares: and usually when a people have entangled themselves in the snares of sin, God sets evil men at once to rule over them and entangle them with the snares of those sufferings which are most proper to their sins.

And thus 'tis conceived *Elihu* answers those expostulating demands which *Job* puts (*chap. 21. 7.*) *Wherefore do the wicked live? become old? yea, are mighty in power?* Here are three questions, First, *Why do they live?* they are not worthy to breathe. Secondly, *Why become they old?* they deserve to be cut off in their youth, and not to live out half their dayes. Thirdly, *Why are they mighty?* Why do they command all, who use their might only to do mischief? *Elihu* answers these questions in a word, God giveth power into the hands of evil men, because of the sins of the people. As if he had said, if at any time you see the wicked in great power and prosperity, 'tis a signe the people are very wicked, and God will punish and scourge them by the hands of such for their wickedness.

This is a truth, and much is said by some Interpreters for the making of it out from the Text; but taking it as 'tis given, I shall only give you two Notes from it.

First, *Bad Princes are set up by the permission, yea disposition of God.*

He makes evil men to reigne. The same power which brings wicked men into the world, sets wicked men high in the world. It is of God that any wicked man hath a place in the world, and it is of God that any wicked man gets into the high places of the world. All the Kings of Israel from first to last were stark naught and very wicked, yet they were all of God's setting up, though their own ambition, or the satisfying of some lust, put most of them upon aspiring to get up. In the first book of the Kings (*chap. 11. 29, 30, 31.*) *Ahijah the Prophet finding Jeroboam* (the first and worst of them) *in the way, caught the new Garment that was on him, and rent it into twelve pieces, and he said unto Jeroboam, take thee ten pieces; for thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, behold, I will rend the Kingdom out of the hand of Solomon, and will give ten*

Tr'bes

Tribes to thee. This *Jeroboam* was so bad a man, that he was not content to sin alone, *but made Israel to sin*; yet even him did God set up, and sent a Prophet to him to tell him so. How unholy soever men are in their place, and how unjust soever in the exercise of their power, yet the holy and just God (for reasons known to himself) placeth them in power.

Secondly, Observe.

God permits wicked Princes to reigne, as a punishment of the resigning sins and wickednesses of the people.

Quidam reges ad utilitatem subditorum dantur & conservationem justitiæ quidam autem ad penam Dei iusto iudicio in omnibus æqualiter superveniente. Irene. l. 5. c. 25.

The power of wicked Princes is the punishment of a wicked people. Some Princes and Magistrates are given as a blessing, for the protection, peace, and profit of a Nation, and for the exaltation of righteousness in it. Others are given as a curse, for the vexation, trouble, and impoverishing of a Nation. The Lord takes this fully upon himself, (*Hos. 13. 11.*) *I gave them a King in mine anger, &c.* Angry providences are the fruit of sin. God gave *Saul* in anger, he gave *Jeroboam* and the rest of the Israelitish Kings in anger; and as he gave them in anger, so he took them away in wrath. The sins both of Princes and people, produce mutual ill effects towards one another.

First, The sins of the people are the cause sometimes why good Princes are immaturally or suddenly taken away from them. *Josiah* that good King was removed very early for the sin of *Judah*; *Pharaoh Necho* had never slain him, had not the people been unworthy of him. Hence that of *Solomon*, (*Prov. 28. 2.*) *for the transgression of a land, many are the Princes thereof.* He means not (as I conceive) many together, but many successively, that is, good Princes go quickly off the stage one after another for the transgression of the people of the land; *But* (as it followeth in the same verse) *by a man of understanding & knowledge the state thereof shall be prolonged.* Our Translators render these latter words in the plural number (as the margin hath it) *by men of understanding & wisdom shall they likewise be prolonged*; that is, when there are many godly, wise, and understanding men in a Nation, God blesteth them with long-lived and aged good Kings or Governours.

Secondly, Whole Nations or a people are sometimes punished for the sins of their Princes, (*Jer. 15. 4.*) the Lord tells the Jewish state he would bring all that evil upon them for the sin of

Manasseh.

Manassch. The sins of Princes prove oftentimes the sufferings of the people. As both by and for their goodness and vertues a people are blessed, so by and for their evils, errors, and vices, a people are endangered, yea sometimes ruined: When the Head of a Kingdome or Common-wealth is sicke, the Body is seldome well.

Thirdly, The sins of a people bring destruction both upon their Princes and themselves together, and wrap all up in one ruinous heape, as *Samuel* threatned the people of *Israel* (*1 Sam: 12. 25.*) *If ye still doe wickedly, ye shall be destroyed both you and do. your King.* He speaks not a word of any sin in their King, but tells them that their wickednesse may bring destruction not only upon themselves, but upon him also.

Fourthly, (which is the poynt in hand) the sins of a people cause the Lord to set evill Princes over them. When once a people refuse the sweet and easie yoke of Christ, or say, *we will not have this man to rule over us*, he in Judgement sends such to rule over them, as shall lay heavy yokes upon them indeed. God useth some Princes as his staff to support a people, and as his shield to defend a people, yea as his Sun to cherish and influence them with abundance of mercies. He useth others only as his sword to wound them, or as his scourge to correct them for their sin. Some are a blessing, others are an affliction to the people. An ancient Poet observing the City wherein he lived, swolne with vanity, and bringing forth dayly many monstrous births of pride, luxury, and oppression, he could not forbear to give his apprehension of the issue in this elegant fancy; *This City (said he) is with child, and I am afraid it will bring forth shortly (and what will it bring forth ?) some severe corrector of your evill insolencies.*

When *Phocas* (a cruel tyrant) had got the Empire, and reigned, there was a good man, who prayed much, about him, and did even expostulate with God, why he would set such a wretch as he was over the Empire; the story saith, he received this answer from God; *I therefore set him to governe, because I could not finde a worse.* And I finde a like report of another, though in a lower degree of power, yet in great power, wherein carrying himselfe very insolently, one sayd to him; *Why are you thus haughty and high-minded, why so proud of your power, God did not put you into the government of this place, because you were worthy of it, but be-*

*Regum lapsus
pena populorū
est; sicut enim
eorum virtute
servamur; ita
eorum errore
periclitamur.*

*Quid enim pos-
sit habere cor-
pus reipublice
capite largui.*

*Vicium fere ei-
vitas hæc, ti-
meo autem ne
pariat, virum
Correctorē ma-
le insolentie.*

*Theogn:
Cur Domine
Phocam impe-
ratorem consti-
tuisi? respon-
sum datum, quia
non inveni po-
torem.*

*Cur superbum?
non es creatus
Episcopus, quod
dignus sacerdo-
tio sis, sed quod
civitas tali
digna erat E-
piscopo.*

Deus quibusdā cause we were worthy to have a man of your worthlesness set over us.
malū tanquam The learned Moralist treating of the righteous, though late ven-
carificibz u- geance of God upon men, hath this passage; God (saith he) useth
sus est, ad su- some men as tormentors to afflict and punish others. Which is verifi-
endum de a- ed in most tyrants. Such a bitter medicine was Phalaris in his time
his pēnas; quōd to the Argēnines, and Marius to the Romānes. St Augustine
verum esse de speaking of Nero, maketh this conclusion; The power of Govern-
plērisq; tyrā- ment is not given, no not to such, but by the providence of the most
nū arbitror; high God, when he judgeth the affaires or manners of mankind just-
Tale medici- ly deserve and call for such Lords and Masters.
mentum fuit

Argēntinū O let nations take heed; The sins of a people, are the worst
Phalarū, Mu- snares of a people; sin provokes God to set up Princes for a snare.
rius Romanis. As therefore the Psalmist admonisheth Princes, *Be wise now there-*
Plutarch: de fore O ye Kings, and learned ye Judges of the earth; so I may say,
sera Num: Be wise, O ye people, and obedient all you that are inhabitants of the
Vindicta. earth, serve the Lord with feare, and rejoyce before him with trem-
Etiā talibus bling, kisse the Son (submit to Jesus Christ) lest he be angry, and
(Neroni scilicet) give you such Princes and Powers, or put you into such hands as
petestas non da- shall break and vex you to purpose, and make you know what it is
tur nisi summi to serve men in rigour, having refused to serve God in love. Many
dei providētia, in all nations are apt to complaine much, when they have any bur-
quando res hu- dens upon them by Governours, but few complaine of their owne
manas judicat sins, which cause God to burden nations with such Governours;
talibus dominū let all leave off complaining of evill Governours, and complaine
dignas. Aug: more of their owne evill government, both of their hearts and
lib: 5. de Civ: lives.
dei. cap. 19.

Thus we see how this text according to these distinct translations, First, gives warning to Princes, *That the hypocrite reigne not, lest the people be ensnared*; and, Secondly, gives warning to people, that they provoke not God by their scandalous offences, to set wicked Princes and Powers over them.

J O B. Chap. 34. Verſ. 31, 32.

*Surely it is meete to be ſaid unto God, I have borne
chafiſement, I will not offend any more.*

*That which I ſee not, teach thou me: if I have done
iniquity, I will doe no more.*

E *lihu* having convinced *Job*, both of the power of God, to doe what he pleaſeth, and alſo of his righteouſneſſe, that he is juſt in whatſoever he pleaſeth to doe, proceedeth to give him counſell, how to carry himſelfe better towards God, then by his former ſpeeches and expoſtulations (hinted at the 5th verſe of this Chapter) he ſeemed to have done. In theſe two verſes he gives him (according to our tranſlation) counſell conſiſting of three branches.

Fiſt, He counſells him to a due ſubmiſſion, to the hand of God. In the former part of the 31th verſe; *Surely it is meete to be ſaid unto God, I have borne chafiſement.*

Secondly, He counſells him to reformation, or to a gracious reſolution of laying downe every ſinfull thing, or what ever was a provocation to God. This he doth once and againe, twice in theſe two verſes; Fiſt, in the cloſe of the 31th verſe; *It is meete to be ſayd unto God, I will not offend any more*; Secondly, in the cloſe of the 32^d verſe; *If I have done iniquity, I will doe no more.*

Thirdly, *Elihu* counſells *Job*, to pray for further diſcoveries, both of his ſins, and ſinfullneſſe, as alſo of his duty, at the beginning of the 32^d verſe; *That which I ſee not teach thou me.* Thus you have the diſtinct poynts of that counſell which *Elihu* gives *Job*, according to our reading of theſe words. There is another reading, which I ſhall touch, when I have fiſt opened and proſecuted the words as they ſtand in ours.

Verſ. 31. *Surely it is meete to be ſayd unto God, I have borne
chafiſement; I will not offend any more.*

Theſe are child-like words, ſuch words as a faulty, yet a ſub-

mitting repenting childe, speakes to a displeased father, when he is under his rod, (yet such as become the most aged and growne men in grace) *I have borne chastisement*, I have been under thy correcting hand, forgive me O my father, I will doe so no more. Thus *Elihu* adviseth *Job*, to bespeak God his father while he was afflicting him.

Some render the former part of this verse, by way of interrogation, or question, *Hath he sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will offend no more ?* hath *Job* spoken thus to God ? As if *Elihu* (making his appeale to the by-standers) had sayd, *Ye all are witnesses that Job hath not yet humbled himselfe under the correcting hand of God, but rather charged God with severity, in dealing with him, and over-boldly equir'd into the reason of his dealings.* Our affirmative translation carrieth the same sense with this interrogative, and questioning translation ; for when *Elihu* saith to *Job*, *It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement ;* he supposeth, that *Job* had not sayd so.

Surely it is meete to be sayd unto God.

The Hebrew particle which we render *surely*, commonly signifieth, *for*, as giving an account or reason, of somewhat that went before ; yet we render it well both here, and elsewhere, *surely*, according to the scope of the place ; especially seeing *Elihu* speaking thus, is not giving a reason of what was sayd before, but inferring a duty from it.

Againe, The word *meete*, is not expressly in the Hebrew text, yet it is clearly implied in it, and therefore added by our translators to fill up, and cleare the sense ; the originall is, *It is to be sayd unto God*, we say, *It is meete to be sayd unto God*,

I have borne chastisement.

The word *chastisement* also is not expressly in the original, there it is only, *I have borne*, but because *bearing* must needs import, that somewhat is borne as a burthen, and seeing according unto the subject matter that *Elihu* is upon with *Job*, it must referre to some affliction or chastisement laid upon him, therefore we fitly supply this word *chastisement*, *It is to be sayd unto God, I have borne ;* what ? (it cannot be meant of any outward corporall burthen, or visible load laid upon his back ; but, *I have borne*)

cha-

chastisement, affliction, or correction; *It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement*; that is, I both have and will beare, whatsoever thou hast, or shalt be pleased to lay upon me; I will not dispute thy burthens, but take them up. So then, this first part of the verse is a direction ministred to *Job*, shewing him how to behave himselfe in the bearing of affliction; He must not strive or struggle with them, nor with God about them, but sustaine them. And this direction is not peculiar to *Job's* person, or to his case alone, but it belongs to all that are in affliction, let their case be what it will; all such ought to beare quietly or patiently to abide under the burthen which God layeth upon them. I shall not stay upon the opening of the speciall signification of that word *chastisement*, because it is not in the Hebrew text, only thus, chastisements are usually taken for those afflictions, or afflicting providences, which God layeth upon his owne children; he layeth judgements upon the wicked, and punishments upon the ungodly, but properly, and strictly, that which falls upon his owne people is called *chastisement*. For though in Scripture, there are dispensations of God towards his owne people, spoken of under the notion of judgement, yet they have not a proper sense of judgement, as proceeding from wrath, and intended for revenge. Wrath is the spring from whence judgements flow, and as to their issue, they tend to the satisfaction of Justice. This God doth not expect, at the hands of his owne children, and therefore their afflictions are most properly called chastisements, *Surely it is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement.*

Hence note.

It is our duty when the hand of God is upon us, or when we are under chastisements, to speake humbly, meekly, and submissively to God.

We ought alwayes to be humble, and carry it humbly towards God, but then especially when God by any afflicting providence is humbling us. The Prophet (*Hos. 14. 2.*) calling that people to returne unto the Lord, adviseth thus; *Take with you words, and turne to the Lord, say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously, so will we render the calves of our lips.* As *Elisha* here makes a kinde of directory, what a person in affliction should say unto God, *It is meete to say unto God*, that is, for a man in thy case,

to say thus unto God ; so that Prophet, by the Spirit, saith, *Take unto you words, and turne to the Lord*; and say or speake thus unto him ; though not strictly, syllabically, in so many words, yet to this sence, and purpose, or according to this tenour, speak thus, *Take away iniquity, and receive us graciously*. And when the Prophet saith, *Take unto you words*, his meaning is not that they should affectedly study a forme of words for God, much lesse that they should artificially counterfeite words which their hearts had not conceived, or were not correspondent to their hearts, (many speake words, even to God, which never come neare but are meere strangers to the intents of their hearts) but sincere words, humble words, words of supplication, not expostulating words; not quarrelling words, not murmuring words, not meere complaining words, but take to you words of confession, and submission, and to present your selves and your condition before the Lord. The Preacher (*Eccles: 12. 10.*) *sought to finde out acceptable words*, and so should we when we speake unto men; Preachers of the word should seeke to finde out acceptable words; not fine words, not swelling words of vanity, not flattering soothing words, but *acceptable words*, that is, such as may finde easie passage into the heart; or such words as may make their passage into the heart, through the power of the Spirit of God. Now if the Preacher sought to finde out acceptable words, when he spake to the people, much more should we when we speak to God. O how should we labour then to finde out acceptable words. All words are not fit to be spoken unto God; the words that are (in such cases as the text speakes of) may be reduced to these two heads.

First, They must be *God justifying words*, that is, words by which we acquit the Justice of God, how sore, and how heavy soever his hand is upon us. When *Daniel* (*Chap: 9. 7, 14.*) was laying before the Lord the calamitous state of that people (they were under as sore judgements as ever nation was, *For under the whole heavens* (saith he there) *hath not been done, as God hath done unto Jerusalem*) yet all the words he spake unto God, tended unto the justification of God; O Lord (said he) *righteousnesse belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day, to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, &c.* We have not had one stroake more, then we have deserved, there hath not been a grain of weight more in our burthen, then we have brought

brought upon our selves, there hath not been a drop in our cup more then we have given just cause for, *Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us, for the Lord our God is righteous in all his works, which he doth, for we obeyed not his voice;* these are words fit to be spoken unto God.

Secondly, We are to take to our selves *self-condemning, self-abasing, self-emptying words.* Such we finde in that chapter, (v. 5, 6, 7.) *To us belong shame, and confusion of face, &c.* these are the words we should take to our selves, and thus it is meet to be said unto God, whensoever his chastisements are upon us.

Secondly Observe.

It is our duty to acknowledge it to God, that he hath chastened us, when he hath.

We must own his hand in afflicting us, as much as in prospering us, in casting us down, as much as in lifting us up, in wounding us, as much as in healing us; It is meet to be said unto God, we have born chastisement, thy hand hath been upon us. The neglect of, or rather obstinacy against this, is charged as a great sin (Isa. 26. 17.) *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see;* that is, they will not acknowledge thy most eminent appearances in anger against them. 'Tis so with many at this day, though there be a hand of God (as it were) visibly afflicting their bodies, and estates, their children and families; yet they will not see, that it is a hand of God; but say as the Philistines, *it is a chance,* or, it is our ill fortune; it is from the negligence of this man, or from the malice of that other man. All this while there is no acknowledgement of the hand of God. They say not with Eli, (1 Sam. 3. 18.) *It is the Lord;* nor with David, (Psal. 39. 9, 10.) *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it; Remove thy stroke away from me, I am consumed by the blow of thine hand. It is as much our duty, and for the glory of God, to confess that our afflictions are of God, as our mercies and favours.*

Thirdly Observe.

The chastenings of God must be born, they must be endured.

Many are chastised who cannot say they have born chastisements; It's an ordinary thing to be under chastisement, but it's a great thing and requires much holy skill and spiritualness to bear a chastisement;

ment ; the duty of a Christian lies most in two points.

First in doing, or in active obedience.

Secondly in suffering, or in passive obedience, and there is as much of God, as much of grace, as much of holiness, yea I may say much more held out in bearing and in suffering, then there is in acting or in doing.

But you will say, what is it *to bear*, that you make it so difficult a matter to bear chastisements? How must chastisements be born? or what is it to bear them?

I will answer the question under two heads. First, Negatively, To bear chastisement is not

First, meerly to finde or feel it upon our shoulders as a burthen which pincheth or presseth us ; so a beast may bear.

Secondly, it is not a bearing meerly because we cannot help it, or be rid of our burden, for so the worst of men may bear ; they bear the greatest burthens that God layeth upon them, because they cannot avoid them, nor ease themselves of them.

Thirdly, It is not a bearing stoutly, or slightly, to make nothing of it ; so proud men bear, men of unsubdued spirits unto God, and his word, regard not what they bear, nor what God doth to them.

Fourthly, It is not a bearing them sowlly or sullenly ; for so discontented persons bear ; yea, so the devil beareth the burthen which the hand of God hath laid upon him.

Fifthly, Nor is it a bearing chastisement faintly or dispondingly; so weak believers bear. *To bear and faint, is not the bearing of faith.* Neither of these are the bearing of chastisement which *Elihu* intends in this counsel, when he saith, *It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement.* Thus ye see the Negative, what the bearing of it is not?

Secondly, I answer affirmatively, To bear a chastisement as an act or work of grace, is

First to bear it *sensibly* ; that is, feeling the weight of the hand of God, and tasting the bitterness of that cup of sorrow which he giveth us to drink.

Secondly, 'Tis a bearing of it submitingly, humbly, patiently, laying our selves down at the foot of God, and saying, as *Eli* did, *Let him do what seemeth him good* ; or as *David*, (2 Sam. 15. 26.) *Behold, here I am, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.* We

never

never bear any evil of affliction well, till we can say (with a sweet resignation of our selves) to God, do with us what seemeth to the good. And (for our encouragement I may say) nothing can hurt a godly man which seemeth good to God.

Thirdly, 'Tis a contentful bearing, or a bearing contentedly ; Thus Christ spake (*Psal. 40.* and 'tis cited by the Apostle *Heb. 10.*) *Lo, I come to do thy will, I am content to do it* ; what was that ? It was to bear or suffer ; the greatest part of what Christ was to do, was to bear or suffer *the chastisement of our peace*, (*Isa. 53.5.*) and in suffering to be made a sacrifice for us ; his contentment to do the will of God, was a contentment to suffer. Of such a spirit should the people of God be ; bearing chastisement not only patiently, but contentedly ; this is hard, but this cannot be left out in the full exercise of that grace.

Fourthly, 'Tis to bear it (more then contentedly) willingly ; how free was Christ to bear, when he said (*John 18. 11.*) *The cup which my father hath given me, shall I not drink it ?* Surely I will, I am willing to drink it, though it be a bitter cup. We are not to will our sufferings, but to suffer them willingly ; there is a vast difference between these two ; I do not say we are to will our sufferings, but we are to suffer them willingly ; we must suffer what, and how, and when, and how long God will ; and when God willeth our sufferings, we must suffer with our wills, or be willing to suffer.

Fifthly, To bear chastisement in the sence here intended, is not only to bear it with our will, but with our affections, not only willingly, but acceptably, and embracingly ; 'tis to say *welcome cross*, because it is the will of God. There is no chastisement that we can rejoyce in, or have any affection to, considered in it self, but to bear chastisement in contemplation of the will of God, should work our hearts to an accepting, to an embracing, to a welcoming of it ; we should say to all our sufferings, welcome, by the will of God.

Sixthly, 'Tis to bear it prayerfully ; we must bear silently in opposition to complaining ; but we must not bear silently in opposition to praying. While chastisement is upon our backs, supplications must be in our mouths ; and we must pray, first, That we may see the reason why or for what cause God chasteneth us : Secondly, We must pray, that we may answer the ends which God

aimeth at in chastening us. Thirdly, That we may have fresh power to bear his chastenings. Fourthly, That God would be pleased to remove our chastenings. While we bear chastenings, we may pray, and pray hard that God would take them away. *David* had no sooner said, *I opened not my mouth*, (that is, complainingly) *because thou didst it* (Psal. 39. 9.) but presently he opened his mouth in prayer (vers. 10.) *Remove thy stroke away from me*. While we bear our cross patiently and willingly, it would be our sin not to pray for deliverance from it. To say I am under a chastisement, and let the Lord keep it upon me as long as he will, I will never ask him to take it off; were a most unbecoming frame of spirit. They that bear affliction most cheerfully, should pray most earnestly to be eased of it; we must be willing to bear them alwayes, yet we must pray that we may not bear them long. If a childe under the rod of a parent, should not say, *pray father stay your hand, it is enough*, but let him go on striking, and never intimate a desire of his forbearance, this were a signe of stubbornness, not of patience and submission. 'Tis as bad not to ask release from our troubles, as to murmur at them, or to be unquiet under them. Remember then, you must be as much in the exercise of prayer as of patience under the cross, and that in these four respects. Thus you have the answer to that question; by which it appears, that 'tis no easie matter to say what *Elihu* saith, *It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement*?

There is yet another question, (for some may demand) why should chastisements be thus born? I answer,

First, We must bear them according to all the rules before given, because they come from God. Our afflictions are Gods allotment, we must bear what he appoints: therefore old *Eli*, though he had failed, and sinned greatly, and so brought a cloud of calamity upon himself and his family (the very report whereof, as *Samuel* told him, would make both ears of every one that heard it, to tingle) yet he composed his spirit to a submissive hearing of it, upon this single consideration, *It is the Lord*, and there is enough in that consideration to make all men submit. For first, The Lord is supream, and therefore what he doth must be born. Secondly, He is a Father, a childe must bear what a Father layeth upon him; and as the Lord is a father, so he is not a hasty, imprudent, or passionate father, but a most wise and judicious father; therefore 'tis
our

our interest as well as our duty to bear his chaſtiſements. Yea, he is a gracious, tender, and compaſſionate father, and when we know he that layeth a hand of affliction upon us, hath alſo a heart full of compaſſion towards us, we ſhould willingly bear his hand.

Secondly, Chaſtiſements are to be born in the manner directed, becauſe they are for our good, and ſhall we not bear what is good for us? *It is good for me* (ſaid David, *Pſal.* 119. 71.) *that I have been afflicted*; and ſo the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12. 10.) *For they verily for a few dayes, chaſtened us after their own pleaſure, but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holineſs.* Chaſtiſements are for our profit, and ſhall not we bear that which is for our profit? If God ſhould lay chaſtiſements on us for our hurt, meerly to vex us, & to put us to pain, or meerly becauſe he delights in our ſufferings, who could bear them? But it is meet to bear what God layes upon us, becauſe he doth it for our good and profit.

Thirdly, We muſt bear chaſtiſements in the manner ſhewed, becauſe unleſs we bear them ſo, they will do us no good, or we ſhall have no profit by them, and that's a miſery indeed. To bear ſmart, and finde no advantage coming in by it; to drink gall; and to have no ſweetneſs come out of it; to endure loſs, and to have no kinde of profit by it is very grievous. Now what ever chaſtiſement is laid upon any, it doth them no good, and they can have no profit by it, unleſs they bear it as was before deſcribed; it is not the bare being afflicted, that doth us good, but it is the wiſe management, or the ſkilful bearing of it that doth us good; and therefore we finde, that the Apoſtle (*Heb.* 12. 11.) when he had ſaid, *There is no affliction joyous for the preſent, but grievous,* adds, *Nevertheless afterwards it yeildeth the peaceable fruit of righteouſneſs,* (but to whom? What to every one that is afflicted, have they theſe ſweet fruits? No, but) *to them that are exerciſed thereby.* Afflictions bring no ſweet fruits to them that have them, unleſs they be exerciſed by them: how exerciſed? Afflictions exerciſe every one that hath them; they are to all a paſſive exerciſe, but to be exerciſed, notes here an active exerciſe; they who graciouſly exerciſe themſelves in affliction, ſhall without doubt finde benefit and fruit by affliction.

But ſome may ſay, what is it to be thus exerciſed by affliction?

I anſwer (for the opening of that Scripture) to be exerciſed, is,

First, To be much in searching our own hearts, and wayes, or how 'tis with us, and what hath been done by us, (*Eccles. 7. 14.*) *In the day of adversity consider*, that is, bethink your selves, First, What God is doing. Secondly, What you have been doing. Thirdly, What becomes you to do in such a day. The prophet points us to the two latter Duties of such a day in one verse, (*Lam. 3. 40.*) *Let us search and try our wayes, and turn again to the Lord.* *To search our wayes*, is to consider what we have been doing; *to turn to the Lord*, is the great thing to be done, in a day of adversity.

Secondly, As this exercise of the soul consists in searching our own hearts; so in searching the heart of God (if I may so speak) that is, in an humble enquiry to the utmost; what God meaneth by any affliction, what hath moved him to afflict us; and we have as much cause to search Gods heart, as our own in this case. Thus in that National affliction (*2 Sam. 21. 1.*) when the famine continued three years, year after year, it is said, *David enquired of the Lord, why is it thus?* he search'd Gods heart by desiring an answer from the Lord, what sin it was which provoked him to that sad dispensation. And thus we should be enquiring of God by prayer what sin he striketh at, or what grace he specially calleth us to act by any affliction which he sendeth either upon our families or persons.

Thirdly, There is an exercising of our selves in searching the affliction it self; first, into the nature of it. Secondly, into the circumstances of it, how timed, and measured, by what hand, and in what way the Lord deals with us; this is a great exercise, and unless we are thus exercised under affliction, we get smart, and loss, and bitterness, but no good at all by it. So much for the first counsel given Job by *Elihu*, *It is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement.*

His second counsel as it lies here in the order of the Text, is about the reformation, or the amendment of what is amiss.

I will not offend any more.

לא אחבל ^{a radice} חבל ^{significat magna nocendi cupiditate ardere sicut mulieres ardent desiderio concipiendi fatum; transfer- tur in secunda conjugatione, vel ad parturientium dolores, vel ad concupiscendi libidinem. Moller in Psal. 7. 14.} It is fit the afflicted should say unto God, *I wil not offend.* The root of the word here used, signifieth sometimes the pains of travel in

childe-

childe-bearing, (*Cant.* 8. 5.) *I raised thee up under the Apple-tree, there thy mother brought thee forth, there she brought thee forth that bare thee.* And again (*Psal.* 7. 14.) *Behold he travelleth with iniquity, and hath conceived mischief, and brought forth falshood :* It signifieth also in Scripture to corrupt, or to pollute, (*Neh.* 1. 7.) *We have dealt very corruptly against thee, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the judgements which thou commandest thy servant Moses.* To deal corruptly, or to do corruptly, what is it but to sin against or offend God ? Every offence or sin, springs from the corruption of our own hearts, and is a corruption of our wayes and manners. Both these readings, *I will not offend,* or, *I will not corrupt,* meet in the same sence ; for to corrupt our wayes is to offend, and to offend is to corrupt our wayes ; to do any evil is to corrupt our selves, or others. So then, the meaning plainly is this, *I will corrupt my way no more ;* the man in affliction must say to God in a deep sence of, and sorrow for his former sins, offences, and corruptions, *I will offend, I will corrupt no more.* Now, comparing the former counsel with this ; Observe, *First.*

Non tantum in Piel, sed & in Kall videtur usurpari pro corrumpere, Zech. 11. 7. 14. Job 34. 31. De Dieu in loc.

Chastisement is for amendment.

The evil of affliction is brought upon us, that we may take heed of, and turn from the evil of sin, (that's intimated by the connexion) therefore to go on offending, while God is chastening, is to add rebellion to our sin. It was the brand of *Ahaz* (*2 Chron.* 28. 22.) *in the time of his distress, he trespassed yet more against the Lord ;* whereas being in distress, he should have said to the Lord, *I will trespass no more.*

Note secondly.

When God chastens us, we should promise amendment.

We should tell God, we will him offend no more, we will grieve him no more, we will provoke him no more, we will dishonour him no more ; the least sin once committed is too much, therefore we should engage to sin no more.

But it may be question'd, can any man make such a promise, or take such an engagement upon himself, when under chastisement, that he will offend no more ? Is that degree of perfection attainable in this life, to offend no more ? How then is this *meet to be said*

said unto God, I will offend no more ? Must we promise things that we cannot perform ? Is there any man chastened that offends not again ? saith not the Apostle *James, in many things we offend all ?* Is it then meet to say this unto God, *I will offend no more ?* Is it not sinful to make a promise not to sin ? I answer,

First, by way of concession. No man may promise, what ever his chastisements are, that he never will sin at all any more, no man can make any such promise, neither is that the meaning here; but he that is under the chastening hand of God, may and must, promise that he will not commit such, or such a sin any more ; especially not such a sin as he most suspects to have brought the chastisement upon his back ; we may make promises against particular sins, though we cannot promise we will never sin.

Secondly, We may promise, when we are under the chastening hand of God, that we will offend no more, in such a manner as we have offended formerly, so foolishly, so vainly; so negligently ; we may and must promise to be more watchful, that we sin not the same sin again either for matter or manner.

Thirdly, When chastened, we may say unto God absolutely, we will offend no more, with respect to the purpose of our souls ; that is, we must lay aside all purposes of committing any sin ; yea we may, we must tell the Lord, 'tis the desire and purpose of our souls, 'tis our ayme, and shall be our endeavour to offend no more. The ayme of every true believer is not to sin, though (in this world) it be not the attainment of any (1 John 2. 1.) *My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not .* As if the Apostle had said, I would fain wynde up your hearts to such a pitch, that you may not sin at all; *But if any man sin, we have an Advocate. with the Father ;* I know you cannot but sin, yet let it be your care not to sin, and your prayer to offend no more. And how should we bless the Lord, if we could live without sin, and be for ever rid of it ! we should wish a thousand times more to be quit of sin, then affliction ; thus we must say unto God, we will offend no more.

Fourthly, though we cannot promise, or take up such a resolution absolutely, nor in our own strength, yet we may and ought in the strength of Christ, or to the utmost of that strength and grace, which he gives out, and bestoweth upon us.

I shall have occasion to speak further to this point, from those words

words of the 32d or next verse, (which are of neer alliance both as to matter and form with these here) *If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Only before I pass from this rendering of the Text in hand, take two Notes more ; In that *Elihu* telleth the penitent person, he ought to say unto God, *I will not offend any more.*

Note, First.

A truly humbled and repenting soul, is as careful to avoid the all of sin for the time to come, as to be freed from the guilt of sin past.

This holy care is a sure argument of a good conscience. A wicked wretch may be desirous to have former offences pardoned, but he hath not any unfeigned purpose not to offend any more ; and usually he hath no sooner cast up his sin by a seeming penitent confession, but he returns with the dog to his vomit by a fresh commission of his sin. Sorrow for sin yeilds no comfort ; if not accompanied with a care not to sin. Christ was not so rigid to the woman taken in Adultery as her accusers were, yet he saith to her, (*John* 8. 11.) *Go and sin no more* ; as if he had said, thy case will be sad, though now thou hast escaped or got rid of thy accusers, if thou tradeest on in this wicked way. And when *David* prayed for purging the sin past, he also prayed for establishing by the free Spirit of God, against such-like temptations in time to come, (*Psal.* 51.) as if he had said, Lord, I do not ask pardon that I might take liberty to offend again, but I desire thy confirming and preventing grace, that I may offend no more.

Secondly, From the extensiveness of this engagement, to which *Elihu* directs the penitent person, *I will not offend any more*, neither in one kinde nor other.

Note.

He that is truly humbled for any one sin, will to his utmost avoid every sin.

He saith, I will not offend any more. He that loves God, cannot live in the doing of any one thing which God hates ; but as he expects good out of all the promises, so he hath respect to all the commandments ; whosoever hath so, would not offend in any thing any more.

Further,

Further, as this latter clause is translated, *I will corrupt no more.*

Note.

First, *Sin is a corruption.*

We shall do well to look upon sin in all its notions, to make it loathsome to us; this is one notion of it, sin corrupts every thing and person it hath to do with.

First, Sin is the corruption of our nature, the whole mass of mankind, and the whole of every man is leavened by it.

Secondly, Sin is the corruption of our conversation, and of our way, (*Gen. 6. 11, 12.*) *God looked upon the earth, and behold it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth.* Moses warns the people of Israel against sin upon this ground, (*Deut. 4. 16.*) *Left ye corrupt your selves, and make you a graven image,* read *Psal. 53. 1. Hos. 9. 9. Zeph. 3. 7. Zech. 3. 7.*

Thirdly, Sinning is the corrupting of the Commandments of God, a sinner as much as in him lyeth makes void the Law.

Fourthly, Sinning is a corrupting of the Covenant of God; yea some kinde of sinning is a corrupting the blood of the Covenant, or a counting the blood of the Covenant as an unholy thing (*Heb. 10. 29.*) though the blood of the Covenant be in it self infinitely above all corruption, yet sin doth what it can to corrupt it.

Lastly, Some render, *it is meet to be said unto God, I have born chastisement, I will not break;* which we may understand two ways. First, *I will not again break* the Commandment; so it falls in with our Translation, *I will not offend.* Secondly, *I will not break;* that is, those rods, or bonds of chastisement that thou hast laid upon me; as if he should say, Lord, thou hast bound me in these fetters of affliction, and I will abide thy pleasure under them, I will not strive, but submit, I will not break prison, but wait thy time for my deliverance.

Hence Note.

We must bear, not break the bonds of our affliction.

Some (like stubborn children under the chastening hand of a Parent) would even break away from God; or like malefactors, when under the hand of Justice, they would break prison, knock off their irons, and get away. As the wicked do, and speak concerning the bands and cords of Gods Commandments, (*Psal. 2. 3.*)

Let

*Ideo ad Deum
dici debet per-
fero, non dis-
rumpam. Bez.*

Let us breake their bands aſunder, and caſt away their cords from us; ſo ſome ſpeake and doe about the bands and cords of divine chaſtiſements, they will breake from them, or breake them, if poſſibly they can. Let ſuch remember, 'tis beſt when they are in Gods bands, to let him untie them, and when they are in his priſon, 'tis good to abide there, till he is pleaſed to diſcharge and let them out. The Apoſtles being in priſon, the Magiſtrates ſent the Sergeants, ſaying, *Let theſe men goe*, but Paul ſayd unto them, *they have beaten us openly uncondemned, being Romanes, and have caſt us into priſon, and now doe they thruſt us out privily, nay verily, but let them come themſelves and fetch us out.* A godly man when under reſtraint by the illegal or rigorous dealings of the Magiſtrate, will not accept his liberty, upon unworthy termes; ſurely then he will not make an eſcape out of the hand of God unwarrantably. He is ready to accept his liberty with much thankfullneſſe, but he will not force it with violence. A godly man would free himſelfe from ſin, and get heaven by a kind of force (as Chriſt ſpeakes in the Goſpel) but he would not free himſelfe from ſuffering by force, nor get his eaſe by violence. When God bindes him, he ſaith (according to this reading) *I will not breake.*

But you will ſay, who may be ſayd to breake or get by force out of the chaſtning hand of God?

I anſwer; Firſt, they doe it, by way of interpretation, who are impatient and unquiet in their afflictions. A child that ſtrives and ſtruggles under his fathers rod, breakes away from him as much as he can.

Secondly, They actually breake from under the hand of God, who by any ſinfull way helpe themſelves out of their afflictions. Such, when God hath bound them with the cords of affliction, goe to the Devill to looſe & let them out. 'Tis ſad when God imprifons a man, But O how ſad is it to go to the Devill for a releaſe; yet ſo doe all they who being under affliction, endeavour to free themſelves by any ſinful way; eſpecially when they who are perſecuted for the faith & truth of Chriſt, break their faith with Chriſt, and quit the truth before profeſſed, that they may quit themſelves from perſecution. O take heed of ſuch deliverances, rather dye under the affliction hand of God, or the perſecuting hand of man, then free your ſelves from either by putting your hand or ſuffering your mouth to ſin. Better be utterly broken by affliction, then

*Sed ad deum
fortem, qui di-
cit condono, non
destruam, di-
cendum est
præterquam
quod video tu
doce me, si ini-
quitatem ope-
ratus sum non
pergam.
Merl.*

to to breake the bands of affliction ; better dye in affliction, then sin your selves out of affliction. Let God who hath layd the burthen upon you, take it off, or else lye under it still. Thus much for these two counsels given *Job* by *Elihu* ; It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement, and, it is meete to be sayd unto God, I will offend no more ; there is yet a third thing to be sayd unto God, which *Elihu* gives also in counsel, that which I see not teach thou me ; But, before I proceed to that, I shall a while consider another translation of the verse already opened, very Consistent with the Original text, and much Insisted upon by some learned Interpreters, as being full of Gospel sense, and very spiritual matter. According to this second reading the words run thus :

Veri. 31. *But to the Almighty God who saith, I forgive, I will not destroy ; It ought to be said, beside what I see teach thou me, if I have done Iniquity, I will not proceed to doe it.*

The difference of the translation is very evident and eminent ; we read thus ; Surely it is meete to be sayd to God, I have borne chastisement ; I will not offend any more. This translation saith, But to God who saith I forgive, &c. It ought to be sayd, &c. Mr Broughton is exprels for this translation, rendring the text in these words ; Now unto the omnipotent which saith, I pardon, I will not destroy, this shall be said, what I see not teach thou me, &c.

As the words according to our translation containe an humble and a very gracious acknowledgement of the Chastening hand of God, and mans promise of reformation ; so according to this they containe a most precious description of the most gracious disposition of God, speaking two things of himselfe to man.

First, As pardoning.

Secondly, As not destroying. From this double discovery of God, a double duty is infer'd, incumbent upon man. For God having thus declared himselfe ready to forgive sin, and loth to destroy sinners, every sinner should be induced to say thus to God ; I see many of my sins, and I believe I have many sins more which I see not ; therefore, first, I beg of thee, O God, that thou wouldest shew me what I see not, and, secondly, that thou wouldest keep me for ever from doing or committing againe that evill which thou shalt shew me or cause me to see. Thus the 32^d verse is an Inference.

ference of a two-fold duty in man, upon that two-fold manifeſtation of the goodneſſe of God, as a God that willingly pardoneth ſin, and as a God that is unwilling to deſtroy ſinners.

Or we may give the ſumme of theſe two verſes (according unto this ſecond tranſlation) thus; We have firſt an Exhortation to repentance from the moſt mercifull nature of God, both as ready to forgive, and as loth to deſtroy his creatures. The former act importing the taking away of the guilt of ſin; the latter the remittal and removall of the puniſhment.

1 *Condono, in quo eſt remiſſio culpæ.*
2 *Non deſtruam in quo eſt remiſſio pænæ.*

Secondly, We have here a direction about repentance, or to the penitent, ſhewing, how an humbled ſoule ſhould behave himſelfe toward God; He ought to ſay thus; *What I ſee not teach thou me, and if I have done iniquity, I will doe no more.* Where we ſee the humbled ſoule in the exerciſe of a fourefold duty; Firſt, He confeſſeth what ſins he knoweth; Secondly, He confeſſeth or ſuppoſeth, that he hath many ſins which he doth not know. Thirdly, He entreateth the Lord to ſhew him every ſin, whether of heart or life, which he knoweth not of. Fourthly, He engageth that he will not continue in any ſin which the Lord ſhall diſcover to him, or give him the knowledge of. You have thus the generall ſcope of theſe two verſes according to this ſecond reading.

I ſhall now a little open the words, and give Notes from them according to this tranſlation.

But unto God who ſaith, I forgive.

It may here be juſtly queſtioned, how the Original can be render'd into ſuch variety; one tranſlation ſaith, *It is meete to be ſayd to God, I have borne chaſtiſemen*; this other ſaith, *To God who ſaith, I forgive, I will not deſtroy*; *It ought to be ſaid, &c.* The firſt reading makes the words to be ſpoken by man; this ſecond reading gives the words as ſpoken both by God and man, or they are a direction given by the Spirit of God to man, what to ſay to God, *Who ſaith, I forgive, I will not deſtroy*?

Verbum RV dilatiſſime patet ſi quid aliud Hebraicum, in-

I anſwer, for the clearing of that doubt, the difference of theſe readings ariſeth from the copious ſignification of one Hebrew word, which is rendred many wayes in Scripture, eſpecially two.

ter alios tele-randi, parcendi, condonandi remittendi ſignificatum habet etiam ſolitarie ſiſe-poſitum ut hic.

Firſt, *To bear*, in which ſenſe we tranſlate, *I have borne chaſtiſemen*.

-K k k k k 2

ishment. The word *chastisement*, as was shewed before, is not expressly in the text, but supplied, to make out the sense, by our translators: *I have borne, what? thy hand, thy chastisement.*

Secondly, It signifies also to *pardon*, or to *forgive*; I shall referre you to one Scripture, in which that word is used in both these senses (*Gen: 4. 13.*) *And Cain said unto the Lord, my punishment is greater then I can bear*; that's the text, but if you read the margin of our larger Bibles, that saith, *My iniquity is greater then that it may be forgiven, or pardoned*; the text saith, *my punishment*; the margin saith, *my iniquity*; the same word signifieth both sin the cause, and punishment the fruit. Again, there the text saith, *My punishment is greater then I can bear*; and the margin saith, *my iniquity is greater then that it can be forgiven*. So that according to the text, the words are *Cains* complaint against the justice of God; that he dealt over-rigorously with him, *My punishment is greater then I can bear*. And according to the margin, they are a description of his despair of the mercy of God, *my sin is greater then that it may be forgiven*. And as we find the word used in that place, both for bearing, and for pardoning; So in severall other places it is translated by pardoning; take but one Instance in the Psalms, where we find it translated twice in the space of a few verses to forgive or pardon (*Psal: 32. 1.*) *Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven*. And again, *v. 5th*, *I said I will confesse my iniquity, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin*; So that, though there be a different version and translation of the word in this text of Scripture, yet it is such as is consonant to the use of the word in other Scriptures, and also to the truth of the whole Scripture.

Yea, we know that in our English tongue, to *bear with a man*, signifies to forgive him his present fault, or not to punish him and use extremity against him for it. And therefore according to the exigence of any place, the word may be translated either way, and here it may be safely taken in both.

But to God who saith, I forgive, I will not destroy, it ought (or it is meere) to be said, what I see not teach thou me.

Elihu according to the reading now before us, brings in God thus speaking, yea even boasting thus of himselfe, *I forgive, or I pardon.*

Hence

Hence note.

First; It is Gods *owne* profession of his *owne* selfe, that he is a sin-pardoning God.

And God doth so much say or profess this of himselfe, that when he was entreated by *Moses* to shew him his glory, this was the chiefe thing which he sayd of himselfe (*Exod. 34. 6, 7.*) *And the Lord passed before him, and proclaimed the Lord, the Lord God mercifull and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin.* Here's my name (saith God) if you would know how I am called, or what I would call my selfe, this is it, *I am a God forgiving iniquity, &c.*

And as God pardoneth sin, so there is none in heaven or in earth that pardoneth like him, that hath such a name for pardon as God hath (*Mic. 7. 18.*) *Who is a God like unto thee, pardoning iniquity, &c.* The gods of the Earth, that is, Kings and Princes give pardons, and to doe so is the sweetest and choicest flower in the Crowne of Princes, and they usually shew their Greatness by this act of grace when they come first to their Crowne and exercise of their soveraigne power. The Princes or gods of the Earth can pardon, but ('tis no disparagement to put that question) *Can they pardon like God?* no; their pardon is no pardon in comparison of Gods pardon; yea their pardoning is a kinde of condemning compared with the pardoning grace of God. The pardons which Kings give are but the shadow of his pardon, who is King of kings (*Isa. 43. 25.*) *I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgression.* As if he had said, I am he, and there is none else; this glory is proper to me, and none can partake with me in it, nor will I give this glory to another. All sins are committed against God, and (in a sense) against him only, therefore only to be pardoned by him. Who can remit the debt but the Creditor? (*Psal. 51. 1.*) *Against thee, thee only have I sinned.* What debt soever we run into, by any sin committed against man, God only is the Creditor. All that men can doe, is but to forgive the trespassse against themselves; so farre as man is wronged, he may, yea he ought to forgive, as Christ teacheth us to pray (*Math. 6. 12.*) *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.* All that we can forgive is only the trespasss done to our selves, and so forbear personal

sonal and private revenge. We cannot forgive the offence against God. For when Christ saith (*John 21. 20.*) *Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted* ; that remission is but the declaring of a pardon, it is not the bestowing of a pardon, or it is only a ministerial forgiveness, not an authoritative forgiveness ; so to forgive is Gods Royalty ; He saith, *I forgive.*

Secondly, *To God who saith, I forgive, &c.* Forgive ! what ? forgive ! whom ? Here's neither what nor whom, neither things nor persons named, God barely saith, *I forgive.*

Hence observe.

The pardoning mercy of God is boundlesse and unlimited.

Here's no sin named, therefore all are included, no sinner specified, therefore all are intended. *I forgive, I pardon* ; the pardoning mercy of God knows no limits ; it is not limited ; First, to any sort of sins or sinners ; Secondly, it is not limited to any degree of sins or sinners ; let sins or sinners be of what sort they will, let sins or sinners be of what degree they will, they are within the compasse of Gods pardoning mercy. And as this text intimates, that the pardoning mercy of God is boundlesse, because it expresseth no bounds ; So other Scriptures tell us expressly that it is boundlesse, extending it selfe to all sorts and degrees of sins and sinners (*Math. 12. 31.*) *Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven.* That a sin is great, that it is extremely aggravated, is no barre at all to the pardoning mercy of God ; he can as easily pardon great sins as little sins ; even sins that are as Crimson and scarlet, as well as those of the lightest tincture. The dye or colour of some cloaths or stuffs, is so fading, that (as we say) the next wind will blow it off, or cause it to dye away, but scarlet and crimson in graine never change their colour ; yet the pardoning grace of God causeth crimson and scarlet sins to change colour, and makes them as white as the naturall wool or snow, that is, takes them quite and cleane away. Yea the greatnesse of sin is so far from being a stop to pardon, that it is used as an argument to move God to pardon. *David prayeth (Psal. 25. 11.) For thy names sake O Lord, pardon mine iniquity* ; why? doth he say ? because it is little, or only a small sin, a sin committed rashly, unadvisedly, or but once ; no ; he useth none of these excusatory pleas for pardon, but saith, *pardon my sin for it is great.* *Moses was not afraid to speake*

speake for pardon upon this ground also (*Exod: 32. 31.*) Lord (saith he) *this people have committed a great sin, and have made them gods of gold, yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin, &c.* There's a great deale of divine Rhetorique in that speech; *Moses* was not doubtfull, whether God would forgive them their sin, because it was great, but he urged the Lord to forgive their sin because it was great. *Where sin aboundeth, Grace doth much more abound* (*Rom: 5. 20.*) and therefore God is said to pardon abundantly, or to multiply to pardon (*Isa: 55. 7.*) and whom doth he promise to pardon there? even *the man of iniquity*, so that Scripture hath it; *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man (or the man of iniquity) his thoughts, &c.* If you who have sinned abundantly, repent, I will pardon abundantly. The heart of God in pardoning sin is infinitely larger then the heart of man can be in committing sin: and as the least sin needs pardon, so the greatest may have it; nothing hinders the pardon of sin, but the sinners not coming for it, or his not asking it. The sin against the holy Ghost cannot be forgiven; but the reason is, because such as commit that sin utterly reject the grace of God, and tread the blood of the Covenant under their feet, as an unholy thing.

Thirdly, The text speakes in the present tense; God saith not, *I will pardon*, or, possibly, *I may pardon*, but sheweth what he both actually doth, and what he alwayes doth, *To God who saith I pardon.*

Hence note.

God pardoneth presently, he pardoneth continually.

I pardon, is a present, it is a continued act. To pardon is Gods work to day, and Gods work to morrow. As every soule may say of himselfe, *Lord I sin*; not only I have sinned, or I shall sin hereafter, but *I sin*: so saith God, *I pardon*; as men stand alwayes in need of pardon, so God stands alwayes prepared to pardon. *He is* (*Psal: 86. 5.*) *plenteous in mercy, ready to forgive*; The heart of God is never out of frame for that worke, never indisposed to it. *David* found him so (*Psal: 32. 5.*) *I said I will confesse mine iniquity*; he did not say, *I have confessed mine iniquity*; he was not come to a formall Confession; onely he had it upon his heart to humble himselfe before God, and confesse his sin; yet it follows; *and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.*

While.

While there was but a holy resolve upon his heart to confesse his sin, the pardon of it was given him. The holy history of his sin and of Gods mercy assureth us, that the word was no sooner out of his mouth (*2 Sam: 12. 13.*) *I have sinned*, but instantly *Nathan* said, *The Lord hath put away thy sin*. Though God doth not pardon of course, yet he is in a continuall course of pardon; therefore *Moses* prayed (*Numb: 14. 19.*) That God would *pardon the people according to the greatness of his mercy, and as he had forgiven them from Egypt untill then*. As if he had sayd, *Lord, thou hast been pardoning all along from the very first step we took out of Egypt to this day, thou hast exercised abundance of patience, long-suffering and mercy in pardoning this people, now Lord pardon us, as thou hast done from Egypt to this day; doe not stop thy acts of Grace*. The very first act of pardon stands for ever, he that is once pardon'd, is alwayes pardon'd: yet there are dayly renewings of pardon, and fresh acts of it every day.

Fourthly, The word render'd to *pardon*, signifies to *take away*; as to beare a burden upon our selves (according to the former translation) so to beare, or lift it off from another.

Hence Note.

Pardon is the taking away, or the bearing of sin off from us.

An unpardoned soul hath a burden of sin upon him ready to break his back, yea enough to break his heart, were he sensible of it; the Lord by pardon takes this burden off from him. *David* speaks of his sins under this notion of a burden, (*Psal. 38. 4.*) *My sins are gone over my head, they are a burden too heavie for me to bear*. Yea sin is a burden too heavie for the strongest Angel in heaven to bear. But pardon easeth the soul of that burden, or 'tis the unburdening of the soul: Hence also pardon is called the removing of sin, (*Psal. 103. 12.*) *Thou removest our sins from us, as far as the East is from the West*. Pardon removes sin even to the utmost distance, such is that of the East from the West. Pardon is called in another Scripture, the casting of sin behinde Gods back (*Isa. 38. 17.*) *Thou hast cast all my sins behinde thy back*. Ye when God by pardon takes sin from off our backs, he doth not only cast it behinde his owne back, but he layeth it upon the back of his Son. Sin must lye somewhere till it is satisfied for; therefore pardon takes sin off from us, and layeth it upon Christ, (*Isa. 53. 6.*)

6.) *He hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.* While sin is unpardoned, we bear it; and that it might be pardoned, Christ hath born it, (1 Pet. 2. 24.) *He bare our sins in his body on the tree.* Pardoned sin is taken off from the sinner, and laid upon Christ; and he can do well enough with it, he can bear it, and discharge it fully, none else can: Indeed heaps of sin lye on the souls of some sinners, and they feel them no more then a fly: what's the reason of it? Because they are dead in their sins, and nothing is a burden to a dead man, throw a thousand Millstones upon him, he feels none of them: but a soul that is awakened, that hath but so much life put into it, as to feel a conviction of sin, O how is that soul prest and burden'd with the weight of sin! Yet till pardon take sin off from the soul, there it must lye, there it must abide; therefore Christ saith, (John 9. 41.) *Because ye say ye see, your sin remains;* What's that? You are unpardoned, your sin is upon you still; you think your selves very wise and understanding, you think you can do well enough without me, therefore your sin remaineth; that is, it stands in full power and force against you:

Firſtly, Here are no conditions; God saith not, I pardon upon such and such terms, but *I pardon.*

Hence Note.

God pardons freely, he doth not clog pardon with hard terms.

'Tis the glory of God that he pardons freely. The pardon of sin may be considered, First, In the Decree of God from everlasting. Secondly, In the Execution of his Decree; which is, when any are effectually called and converted. Thirdly, As to the manifestation and Declaration of it to the person pardoned. A poor sinner may be unpardoned in his own sence, or in the Court of Conscience, when he is pardoned in the Court of Heaven. Now as pardon is free in the Decree of it, so in the Execution of it, as also in the Declaration of it to the soul; for though something, yea much must be done in the soul before pardon is declared, yet nothing is deserved, all is of free grace. God doth not manifest pardon till man repents and believes; yet he doth not pardon him because he repents and believes.

It may be objected, Surely there is something in us which moves God to pardon, for saith not Christ of *Mary* (Luke 7. 47.) *Many sins are forgiven her, for she loved much.* Hence Papists argue,

L I I I I

that

that, pardon of sin is from something in us, she repented much, believed much, loved much, therefore much was forgiven her?

I answer, That Scripture declares her great love to be the effect of great pardoning mercy, not the cause of it. Christ saith to *Peter*, much is forgiven her; this woman was a noted sinner, and it appears plainly, that much hath been forgiven her, for she loved much. That her many sins are forgiven her, this is the testimony, *she loved much*: The love of God to us, not our love to him, is the reason and original of pardon, (*Isa. 43. 25.*) *I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake.* God pardoneth sin for his own sake, and for Christs sake, not for ours. In one Scripture God saith (*Exod. 34. 6, 7.*) *I will by no means clear the guilty.* In another (*John 6. 37.*) Christ saith, *He that comes to me, I will in no wise cast out.* Till the sinner cometh to Christ, his sins are upon his own account; that is, he stands guilty, and God saith, *I will by no means clear the guilty*; no man shall ever be clear'd of the punishment due to his sin, while the guilt of his sin is untaken off by the blood of Jesus Christ: but besides respect to the blood of Christ (which is the ransom paid for us) God respects nothing out of himself as the reason why he pardoneth us. *I forgive.*

I will not destroy.

Our Translation reads it, *I will not offend.* The word signifies first to offend or sin; it signifies also to destroy; and because destruction is a fruit or effect of sin, one word may well serve for both; so we render it (*Micah 2. 10.*) *This is not your rest, because it is polluted, it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction.* Canaan was the resting place of God himself, (*Psal. 132. 14.*) and it was the resting place of the Jewes after their travel through the wilderness, (*Jer. 31. 2.*) but when once they had polluted the land by sin, the land gave them no rest, but destroyed them; that is, they were destroyed out of the land. Here God declaring himself gracious in pardoning penitent sinners, promiseth rest to them, and freedome from destruction. *I forgive, I will not destroy.*

Hence observe first,
God is able to destroy.

Thus God reported himself by *Moses*, (*Deut. 32. 39.*) *See now, that I, even I am he, and there is no God with me; I kill, and I make*

make alive ; I wound, and I heal ; neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. God doth not say I cannot, but I will not destroy ; (James 4. 12.) There is one Law-giver who is able to save and to destroy : There is but one supream Law-giver, and that's God : and this one Law-giver is able to save and to destroy. There are many Law-givers that are neither able to save nor to destroy ; or if they be able to destroy, they are not able to save. Men in authority, or worldly Powers, have not power alwayes to act their authority, but there is one Law-giver that's able to save and to destroy ; he can save those that obey his Lawes, and destroy all those that transgress them ; he is too strong for the strongest sinner, there is no making peace with him by opposing or overcoming his strength, but by taking hold of his strength, that is, by submitting to it, (Isa. 27. 5.)

Secondly Note.

To forgive sin, or to shew mercy to sinners, is an act to which God declares himself more enclin'd, or better pleas'd with, then to destroy sinners.

Every one that sinneth deserves to be destroyed ; yet saith the Lord, *I pardon, I will not destroy ; I could destroy, and any one sin committed by any man would justifie me against all the world in his destruction : Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God upon that account, (Rom. 3. 19.) yet God doth not destroy. And that he hath no content in destroying, he bindes it with an Oath (Ezek. 33. 11.) As I live saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, &c. as if he had said, I am not bent upon your destruction, I had rather be taken off, and save you, I pardon, I will not destroy.*

If any shall say, Hath God no pleasure in destruction ? Hath he not a will to destroy as well as to save ?

I answer, God hath pleasure in destroying, but it is in the destruction of those who obstinately resist his Will, who refuse both his counsel and his Covenant ; to such indeed he saith (Prov. 1. 26.) *I will laugh at your calamity, and mock when your fear* (that is, the thing you feared) *cometh, as desolation, &c. That, the men in whose calamity God laugheth are such, is evident by the character given of them at the 25th verse, Ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. As if God had said, you*

have laughed at my counsel, therefore I will laugh at your calamity. The Lord will declare himself delighted in their destruction who have despised instruction; and he will glorifie himself in the actings of his Justice upon them, who have slighted and put by the tenders and entreaties of his mercy. Yet still God declareth himself more pleased in acting and putting forth his saving power, then his destroying power. The Prophet (*Hos. 11. 8, 9.*) most pathetically represents, as it were, a debate in the breast of God himself between his Justice and his Mercy; *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim? Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together; (v. 9.) I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim.* We see after the debate, the Lord determines for sparing, not for destroying. So then, though he can, and will not only destroy, but laugh at the destruction of obstinate sinners, yet he loves to spare rather than to destroy.

Thirdly, From the connexion of these two, pardoning and sparing mercy, God saith first, *I pardon*, and then secondly, *I will not destroy*; who are they whom God will not destroy? they are are such as he pardons.

Hence Note.

Pardoned persons shall never be destroyed.

As soon as *Nathan* had said to *David*, *the Lord hath put away thy sin*, the very next word is this, *thou shalt not dye*, (*2 Sam. 12. 13.*) if *David's* sin had not been pardoned, *David* must have dyed for it. 'Tis a Logical Maxime, *When the Cause is taken away, the Effect is taken away*; Sin is the cause of destruction, therefore when God takes away sin, which is the cause, destruction the effect must needs be taken away too; pardon destroyeth sin, therefore how can they that are pardoned be destroyed? Pardon swallows up sin. As the Apostle speaks of life, (*2 Cor. 5. 4.*) *That mortality might be swallowed up of life*; Here, mortality swallows up our lives by degrees, but hereafter mortality shall be swallowed up at once of life; Now, as life shall then swallow up mortality, so pardon at present swalloweth up sin; for as in our glorified state there shall never any thing of mortality appear, so in a pardon'd estate, nothing of sin shall appear as to hurt us. Sin

pardoned.

*Sublata causa
 tollitur effectus.*

pardoned cannot be found, (Jer. 50. 20.) *In those dayes, and in that time saith the Lord, the iniquity of Jacob shall be sought for, and there shall be none, and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; why not? The Lord answers, for I will pardon them whom I reserve: And if their sins shall not be found, surely they shall not be found guilty, and therefore not destroyed: God may chasten them whom he hath pardoned, but he will not destroy those whom he hath pardon'd; pardoned persons may smart, and smart greatly for sin, but they shall not dye eternally for it, they shall not be destroyed for it. David was pardoned, yet God told him, the sword shall never depart from thy house; and the Lord told him particularly of a sore destruction upon a part of his house presently; because by this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of God to blaspheme, (thou being a Professor, hast opened the mouths of the wicked against profession) therefore (though thou shalt not dye, yet) the childe also that is born unto thee shall surely dye.*

There are two things which the pardon of sin takes away. First, the power or reigne of sin; where-ever sin is pardoned, the strength of it is subdued. God doth not pardon sin as Princes do; they may pardon an evil doer, and yet he still remain as evil and as ready to do evil as ever; they may pardon a thief, and yet he continue to be a thief still; but if God pardons a drunkard, an adulterer, or a thief, he doth not remain a drunkard, or an adulterer, or a thief still; God takes away the power of that sin which he pardoneth. Secondly, The pardon of sin takes away the punishment of sin; it may leave some chastisement, but it wholly takes away the punishment. The Popish doctrine saith, the fault is taken away by pardon, but there is a commutation of the punishment, eternal punishment is changed into temporal, either in this life, or that to come; hence their doctrines of Purgatory, and of Prayer for the dead, &c. all which stuffe comes in upon this account. They cast all men into three sorts, some are Apostles and Martyrs, men very eminently godly, and they go immediately to heaven: there are another sort, and these are Apostates from, or persecuters of the faith; notorious sinners, these go immediately to hell: there are a third or middle sort of ordinary sinners, and they go immediately after death, neither to heaven nor hell, but to Purgatory, where they must bear the punishment

ment of their ſins till they can be prayed out : Chriſt hath only got ſo much favour for them (ſay they) to change their eternal puniſhment into a temporal. The grace of the Goſpel knows nothing of this Doctrine ; that tells us when ſin is pardoned, all is pardoned, both guilt and puniſhment, both temporal and eternal, nothing remains but only chaſtiſement ; how ſorely ſoever a believer ſuffers in this life, yet ſtrictly taken, it is but a chaſtiſement, and there remaineth nothing for him to ſuffer in the life which is to come. And if ſo, then

Pardon of ſin is a precious mercy. 'Tis ſo, Firſt, Becauſe it proceeds from the precious mercies of God. Secondly, Becauſe it comes thorow the precious blood of Chriſt, (*Col. 1. 14.*) Thirdly, Becauſe it opens a door to all precious mercies ; as ſin unpardoned with-holds all good things from us (*Jer. 5. 25.*) ſo ſin pardoned opens the door for all mercy to flow in upon us. Chriſt ſaid to the ſick man (*Matth. 9. 2.*) *Be of good cheer, thy ſins are forgiven thee.* Fourthly, It is a precious mercy, becauſe it ſtops and keeps off all evils and judgements ſtrictly ſo called, *I forgive, I will not deſtroy.* Our comforts cannot ſtand before the guilt of ſin, and our troubles cannot ſtand long before the pardon of ſin ; (*Iſa. 33. 24.*) The higheſt wrath of God appears in this, when he will not pardon ; and it argues the greateſt diſpleaſure of man againſt man, when he prayeth that he may not be pardoned. That was a moſt dreadful prayer of the Prophet, (*Iſa. 2. 9.*) *The mean man is bowed down, and the mighty man humbles himſelf, therefore forgive them not ;* here was a prayer that they might not be forgiven ; and the ground why he prayed ſo, ſeems to be as ſtrange, as the matter of it was dreadful. Is it a ſin to be excepted from pardon, to ſee a mean man bow down, and a mighty man humble himſelf ? The meaning is, they bowed themſelves not to God, but to idols ; all bowing and humbling our ſelves either to worſhip an idol, or in idol worſhip, is rebelling againſt God. We have a like prayer (*Jer. 18. 23.*) the Prophet having ſpoken of the plots and deviſings of the people againſt him, turns himſelf thus to God, *Thou knoweſt all their counſel to ſlay me, forgive not their iniquity, neither blot their ſin from thy ſight.* Nothing can be wiſht worſe to any man then this, that his ſin may never be pardoned. And here it may be queſtioned, how the Prophet could make ſuch a prayer, which ſeems to have the height of all uncha-

uncharitableness in it. I answer, first, The Prophet was led by an extraordinary Spirit to do this. Secondly, We are not to conceive that the Prophet prayed for their eternal condemnation, but that God would call them to a reckoning, and make them feel the evil of their own doings. There is a sin unto death, for the pardon of which we are not to pray, (*1 John 5. 16.*) yet there is no sin about which we are to pray that it may never be pardoned. The worst prayer that can be made against any man, is, that he may not be pardoned; and there is nothing better to be prayed for than pardon. It shewed the height of Christs love, when hanging on the Cross, he prayed thus for his enemies, (*Luke 23. 34.*) *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do;* And the Protomartyr Stephen breathed out a like spirit of charity, while he was breathing out his life (in a shower of stones poured upon him from more stony hearts, *Acts 7. 60.*) with this prayer, *Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.*

Thus, I have finished this 31th verse, both according to our own Translation, and that other insisted upon by many of the learned; only from the connexion of this verse with the next, according to the latter reading, (*To God who saith I pardon, I will not destroy; it should be said, that which I see not teach thou me, if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*)

Observe.

The very consideration that God is ready to pardon sin, should make us resolved against the committing of sin.

The sin-pardoning mercy of God, is one of the highest and most spiritual arguments by which the soul is kept from sin. *There is forgiveness with thee* (saith David, *Psal. 130. 4.*) *that thou mayst be feared;* that is, because thou art so merciful as to forgive sinners, therefore they ought to fear thee, in doing what thy will is, and in avoiding whatsoever is contrary to thy will. 'Tis prophesied, that frame of spirit shall dwell upon the people of God in the latter dayes, (*Hos. 3. 5.*) *They shall fear the Lord and his goodness;* that is, they shall fear to offend the Lord because he is so good, and ready to pardon. It was said by a Heathen (and it may shame many who profess themselves Christians, that a heathen said so) *if I did know that men should never know the evil which I do, and that the gods (so he speaks in their language) would par-*

Sic scirem homines ignoraturos & Deos ignoscituros, tamen non facerem. Seneca.

don and forgive the evil which I do, yet I would not do it. Surely, the spirit of a true believer must needs rise thus high, and higher, upon the clear grounds of Gospel grace, and discoveries of the free love of God. Cannot a true believer say, though I know that God will pardon my sin, though he hath declared that my sin is pardoned, and though I could be assured that men should never know of this sin, if I commit it, yet I will not do it. *To God who saith I pardon, it should be said, I will sin no more.*

I shall now proceed to the 32d verse, which stands fair to either reading.

Vers. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Some carry the general sense of these words, as if spoken by God himself to Job, and spoken by an irony, or in scorn, as if he had thus bespoken him; *If I have afflicted thee beyond thy desert, or have overthrown thy judgment* (that Job had (more then once) complained of,) *if I have not kept to the true rules of reason and righteousness in chastening thee; if in my dealings with thee I have done amiss, or have not done thee right? Shew me wherein* (O Job) *and I will afflict thee so no more.* I shall not stay upon this, but take the words according to our Translation, as the whole verse intends a further description of a person deeply humbled under, and sensible of the hand, the chastening, the afflicting hand of God; who having said (with respect to all-known sins) in the former verse, *I will offend no more*, saith here in this verse concerning all unknown sins, *That which I see not, teach thou me; and if I have done iniquity, I will do no more.*

Si quid me fugit in te affligendo, vel si quid errarem tu me doceas. Si te vexando perperam egi vel injuste me habui, non ultra id fecero, supergratos, Merc.

That which I see not.

There is a two-fold sight; First, Corporal, the sight of the bodily eye. Secondly, Intellectual, the sight of the eye of the minde, or of the understanding; when *Elisha* represents the penitent afflicted person speaking thus, *What I see not*, &c. he intends not a corporal sight but an intellectual. Seeing is here (as often elsewhere in Scripture) put for knowing: *the understanding is the eye of the soul*. How blinde and dark are those men, who have no understanding in the things of God! (*Eph. 4. 18.*) When Christ had

had ſayd, *For judgement am I come into the world, that they which ſee not might ſee, and that they which ſee might be made blinde*; ſome of the Pharifees ſaid unto him (*John 9. 41.*) *are we blinde alſo ? (have we no eyes ?) Jeſus ſaid unto them, If ye were blinde, ye ſhould have no ſin, but now ye ſay we ſee, therefore your ſin remaineth*; that is, your ſin remaineth upon you in the power and guilt of it. In that ſenſe alſo Chriſt uſeth the word (*Math: 13. 14.*) *Hearing ye ſhall hear, and not underſtand, and ſeeing ye ſhall ſee, and not perceive*; ye ſhall have only ſuch a knowledge of God, and of the things of God, of his word, & of his works, as will be of no other uſe to you, then to leave you without excuſe. *Seeing ye ſhall ſee but not perceive*; ye ſhall have a fruitleſs and an unprofitable ſight.

That which I ſee not (or have no underſtanding of) *teach thou me*, is the prayer of the humble ſoule. But what were thoſe things, which he feared or ſuppoſed he did not ſee? Thoſe unſeene things might be of three ſorts.

Fiſt, Thoſe ſins which he did not ſee; and thoſe in a double notion, either corruptions dwelling in him, or evils acted by him. What corruptions, or what tranſgreſſions I ſee not, acquaint me with, annoynt mine eyes that I may ſee them.

Secondly, Thoſe favours and mercies which he did not ſee (we have many mercies which are not knowne to us, or of which we take little, yea no notice at all) thoſe good turns, which I have received and have not been thankfull, or have not improved and made ſutable returns for them, ſhew thou me.

Thirdly, Among the things not ſeene we may number the purpoſes, aimes, and ends of God, in laying thoſe chaſtiſements upon him. As if he had ſayd, *If I have not yet apprehended what thou driveſt at in my affliction, ſhew it me, I beg and heartily deſire a diſcovery of it. And if I have acted unduely with reſpect to thy aimes in chaſtiſing me, I will doe ſo no more.* The acts of God are plaine, but his aymes lie cloſe and are not perceived, but by an enlightned, yea and a very attentive eye. *That which I ſee not,* &c.

Hence obſerve; Fiſt.

The choyceſt ſervants of God may be much in the darke about and ſhort in the knowledge of many things which it much concerns them to know.

M m m m m

Though

Though every believer hath an eye, and an eye open to see the things of God, the things which concern his peace, yet the clearest-sighted among believers know but in part (*1 Cor. 13. 9.*) We all know, but we do not know all. Those words of the Apostle may have a twofold understanding. First, we know, but a little of any thing, that which we know we have but a part of it in our knowledge; in this life we know nothing throughly; nothing to the bottome, no not common principles. *David* saith (*Psal. 119. 96.*) *I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad;* There is such a perfection in thy commandment, that I cannot see, nor can any man come to the out-side of it in this world. And as the holiness of God in the Law is exceeding broad, so there is a hight, a depth, a length, and a breadth in the love of God revealed in the Gospel, which exceedeth all our knowledge. (*Eph. 3. 19.*) *That ye may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, &c.* We know but a part of that love of God, the fruits and effects whereof are all our portion. We are not able to comprehend, though we labour to comprehend the breadth and length and depth and height of it. Our measure of loving God is to love him out of measure; but 'tis a very small measure of the love of God to us which we can know. Thus we know but little of that we know. Secondly, *We know in part*, that is, there are many things which we know not at all, we have no knowledge of some things, which may be fully knowne. Though we know many of our sins and corruptions, yet we have sins and corruptions which we know not of (*Psal. 19. 12.*) *Who can understand his errors?* Who can understand the errors of his understanding? who can understand the errors of his will? who can understand the errors of his affections? who can understand the errors of his actions? who can understand them all? yet they are all understandable. There are many errors in all these, which we know not to be errors, therefore we have need every one of us to pray as *David* there did, *Clenſe thou me from my secret faults.* From secret faults in my understanding, from secret faults in my will and affections, in my practice and conversation. The secret faults which he asked pardon for were not those faults which he had committed in secret, or which other men know not of; but those faults which were secrets to himselfe, or which himselfe knew not of. Further, we know not our faults; First, either in reference

to the doing of evill, or sins of commission; nor Secondly, in reference to the not doing of good or sins of omission; nor Thirdly, doe we know our faults in reference to the manner of doing that which is good. Though we doe not quite omit a duty, yet we faile many times in the doing of it. *We doe little of the good which we ought, and little of the good which we doe is done as it ought.* We have secret sins not only of commission in doing that which is evill, and of omission in not doing that which is good, but also in doing good. There are many flaws and errors in our doing of that which is good, which, though we perceive not, yet the pure eyes of God perceive. So then, as we see not all our errors in omitting duties, so we see not all our errors in performing duties; to see them requireth a spirituall sight indeed. Many can see when they omit a duty altogether, and charge themselves with a fault for it, but our faults in performance of duty, in prayer, in hearing none take notice of them, but they who have a spiritual eye, nor do they alwayes take notice of all of them, nor fully of any of them at any time. We are much in the dark about these errors which accompany our holy duties. The iniquities of our holy things are many, and they lie very close. We may quickly and easily fall into them, but we cannot easily discern them.

For, First, though we performe an act of worship, of Church-worship, of instituted worship, right for the substance, yet we may miss and erre in severall circumstances, and not come up exactly to the outward performance of it. Secondly, much more may we run into errors and faults in the performance of duty, as to the internall part of it; or that frame of heart with which a duty is to be performed. We seldome, I may safely say, we never come up to that zeale, to that self-abatement, to that faith, to that love and delight which should be in us when we approach to, and appeare before God in the duties of his holy worship, whether publick or private. The best of Saints come farre short of knowing all the evill and saylings of their evill and deceitfull hearts, while they are engaged about that which is good, how much more are they short in the knowledge of God; and therefore what reason have we to say, as *Elisha* here directs the penitent soule to say; *That which I know not teach thou me.*

Secondly, Note.

M m m m m 2

It

It is the duty of the moſt knowing ſervants of God to confeſſe their ignorance.

When *Elihu* would have *Job* ſay, *That which I ſee not teach thou me*, he would have him confeſſe, that there was ſome good or evill which he did not ſee. He that deſireth God to teach him, what he doth not ſee, doth therein acknowledge that he doth not ſee all that he ought. Our underſtandings are imperfect as well as our wills and affections; and our ſins or imperfections whereſoever they are muſt be confeſſed. The deficiency of our knowledge, or the imperfection of our underſtanding muſt be confeſſed as well as the imperfection of our will to doe good, and of our doing good. *David* layeth load upon himſelfe in confeſſing the faultineſſe of his underſtanding, or inability to judge aright of what he ſaw before him (*Pſal: 73. 22.*) *So ignorant was I and fooliſh, even as a beaſt before thee.* And the ſpeciall poynt wherein he confeſſed his ignorance, was about the outward diſpenſations of God, in ſuffering wicked men to flouriſh. He had ignorant apprehenſions, and was quite out in that matter; and therefore befools himſelfe and calls himſelfe a beaſt, ſo far was he from ſeeing the mind and deſigne of God as became a Saint. Such an acknowledgement *Agar* made (*Pro: 30. 2.*) *I am more brutiſh then any man, I have not the underſtanding of a man, I neither learned wiſdome, nor have the knowledge of the holy.* This worthy man confeſſed his ignorance; and as the more we know, the more we ſee our ignorance, ſo the more we know, the more we confeſſe our ignorance. They that have but little knowledge, are eſpecially defective in this poynt of knowledge to ſee their ignorance; and are therefore but little troubled with their ignorance. Many think they know enough; ſome, poſſibly, think they know all. They who have leaſt knowledge, are leaſt conſcious of their own ignorance. And as there are many ſins of ignorance, ſo ignorance it ſelfe is a ſin, and therefore to be confeſſed and bewailed before God.

Thirdly, When *Elihu* brings in the penitent perſon confeſſing his ignorance, and begging inſtruction,

It teacheth us,

Sins of ignorance need pardon.

As our ignorance needs pardon, ſo doe our ſins of ignorance. The law of *Moses* teacheth this (*Levit: 4. 2.*) *If a ſoule ſhall ſin through*

through ignorance, &c. he ſhall bring his ſacrifice. He muſt make an attonement for his ſin of ignorance. And we have further directions about offerings for ſins of ignorance, when they are diſcovered and made knowne to the ſinner himſelfe. (*Lev. 5. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.*) *Then (ſaith the Law) he ſhall be guilty,* that is, if when he knoweth his ſin, he doe not performe what the Law requireth in ſuch caſes, then he is not only ceremonially but morally guilty, as a neglecter if not as a deſpiſer of the ordinance and appoyntment of God for his cleaſing. *That which I ſee not*

teach thou me.

The words are a prayer for divine teaching. The teaching of God is two-fold; Firſt, Immediate by his Spirit (*John 14. 26.*) *The Spirit which is the comforter ſhall come and teach you all things.* And againe (*1 John 2. 27.*) *The anoynting (that is, the Spirit) which ye have received of him, abiderh in you: and ye need not that any man teach you;* that is, ye need not reſt in, or pin your faith upon the teachings of man; as you muſt not deſpiſe, ſo ye need not depend upon the inſtruction of man. Secondly, There is a mediate teaching, God teacheth by meanes, inſtruments, and ordinances. Firſt, by the miniſtery of his word; Secondly, by the works of his hands. He teacheth, Firſt, by his works of creation; Secondly, by his works of providence, they are our maſters, tutors and inſtructers. Now when this penitent perſon prayeth, *Teach thou me;* we may underſtand him of both theſe teachings. Firſt, of immediate teaching by the Spirit, who is the anoynting. Secondly, of teaching by meanes, by the preaching of the word of God, and by his providences; in what way ſoever God is pleaſed to teach us, our hearts ſhould ſtand open to receive inſtruction. And what way ſoever we receive inſtruction, it is God that teacheth us. Though men be the inſtruments, yet the effect is of him.

Hence Note, Firſt.

God only is able to teach or ſhew us the things which we know not.

Men alone cannot. Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples, when he com-miſſioned them, (*Matth. 28. 19.*) *Go teach all Nations.* And (*Eph. 4. 11.*) *When he aſcended upon high, he gave ſome Apoſtles, and ſome Prophets, and ſome Evangeliſts, and ſome Paſtors and Teachers;*

Teachers; yet no Teachers can bring home instruction without the teachings of God. The tenour of the new Covenant runs thus, (*Isa. 54. 13.*) *All thy children shall be taught of the Lord.* And again (*Jer. 31. 34.*) *They shall teach no more every one his neighbour, &c.* that is, they shall not be left to the teachings of man: or the teaching of God shall be so glorious, that all shall acknowledge it; though there be instruments, yet the flowing forth of the spirit shall be such, that instruments and means shall be little taken notice of. For when he saith, *they shall not teach every one his neighbour*, it is not an absolute Negative, but shews that there shall be a more excellent teaching; as when the Apostle saith (*2 Cor. 3. 6.*) *Christ hath made us able Ministers, not of the letter, but of the Spirit*; This Negative is not absolute, for the Apostles did teach the Letter, and the Spirit is usually conveyed by the Ministry of the letter, or of the external word; the word is (as it were) the chariot wherein the Spirit rideth, and cometh by the ear to the heart. So that, when Paul saith, *We are Ministers not of the letter, &c.* his meaning is, we are rather, or we are more the Ministers of the Spirit then of the letter. The inward teaching accompanying our Ministry, carryeth the matter, both for conviction and conversion, both for illumination and consolation, not the outward teaching (*John 6. 45.*) *Every man therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me.* And how long soever we go to School to men, how long soever we sit under the Ministry of the ablest Gospel Preachers in the world, we come not to Christ till the Father teacheth; till he joyn his inward teaching to the outward teaching of the Minister, the light and life of grace is not received. It is God who teacheth effectually, men teach but instrumentally. Thus it was prophesied of the Gospel times (*Isa. 2. 3. & Micah 4. 2.*) *Many Nations shall come and say, Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, and to the House of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his wayes, and we will walk in his paths*, that is, he will accompany the Ministers and messengers of his word with his Spirit, he will impower them from on high, and so we shall learn his Statutes, and understand his wayes. David ascribes even his skill in Military affairs to Gods teaching, (*Psal. 144. 1.*) *Blessed be the Lord, my strength, who teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.* God only teacheth a man powerfully to be a good Souldier. Surely then, it

is God only who teacheth us to be good Christians; to be Believers, to be holy. *He hath his seat in heaven, who teacheth hearts on earth.*

Secondly, As these words hold out to us the temper of an humble sinner;

Note.

A gracious humble soul is teachable, or is willing to be taught.

As it is the duty of the Ministers of the Gospel to be apt to teach, that's their special gift, or characteristical property; so 'tis the peoples duty and grace to be apt to be taught, to be willing to be led, and instructed; naturally we are unteachable and untractable. As we know nothing of God savingly by nature, so we are not willing to know; we would sit down in our ignorance, or at most in a form of knowledge. To be willing to learn, is the first, or rather the second step to learning. The first is a sight of our ignorance; and the second, a readiness to be taught, and entertain the means of knowledge.

Thirdly, The words being the form of a Prayer;

Note.

It is our duty to entreat the Lord earnestly that he would teach us what we know not.

It is a great favour and a mercy, that God will teach us, that he will be our master, our Tutor. Now, as we are to ask and pray for every mercy, so for this, that God would vouchsafe to be our Teacher, (*Psal. 25. 4; 5.*) *Shew me thy wayes, O Lord, teach me thy paths; Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; David* spake it twice in prayer, *Lead me, and Teach me: Lead me on in the truth which I know, and teach me the truths which I know not.* So he prayeth again, (*Psal. 119. 26.*) *Teach me thy Statutes, make me to understand the way of thy precepts.* David was convinced that he could not understand the Statutes of God, unless God would be his Teacher; though he could read the Statutes of God, and understand the language of them, yet he did not understand the Spirit of them till he was taught (and taught) of God, and therefore he prayed so earnestly, once and again, for his teaching. When Philip put that question to the Eunuch (*Acts 8. 30.*) *Understandest thou what thou readeest?* He said, *how can I except some man:*

man should guide me? Or, unless I am taught. Though we read the Statutes of God, and read them every day, yet we shall know little unless the Lord teach us. Solomon made it his request for all Israel at the solemn Dedication of the Temple, (1 Kings 8. 37.) *Teach them the good way wherein they should walk.* God who is our Commander is also our Counsellor.

Fourthly, From the special matter wherein this penitent person would be taught, which is plain from part of the latter verse, *If I have done iniquity;*

Note.

A gracious heart is willing to know and see the worst of himself.

He would have God teach him what iniquity he hath done. David was often upon that prayer, (Psal. 139. 24.) *Search me, O God, and know my heart, and see if there be any wicked way in me.* Lord, shew me my sin; as I would not conceal my sin from thee, so I would not have my sin concealed from my self. A carnal man who lives in sin (though possibly he may pray for knowledge in some things, and would be a knowing man, yet he) hath no mind that either God or man should shew him his sin; He loves not to see the worst of himself, his dark part; he as little loves to see his sin, as to have it seen. But a godly man never thinks he seeth his sin enough; *how little soever he sins, he thinks he sins too much,* (that's the general bent of a gracious mans heart) *and how much soever he sees his sin, he thinks he sees it too little.* And therefore as he tells God what he knows of his sin, so he would have God tell him that of his sin which he doth not know. *That which I know not, teach thou me.*

If I have done iniquity, I will do no more.

There are two special parts of repentance. First, Confession of sin, whether known or unknown. This we have in the former part of the verse, *That which I see not, teach thou me.* There is the confession of sin, even of unknown sin. The second part of repentance is reformation or amendment, a turning from sin, a forsaking of that iniquity which we desire God would shew us, we have this second part of repentance in this latter part of the verse.

If I have done iniquity, I will do no more. But why doth he say, *If I have?* &c. Had he any any doubt whether he had done iniquity or no? every man must confess, down right, that he hath sinned, and done iniquity, without ifs or an's. *Solomon* having made such a supposition in his prayer at the Dedication of the Temple, (*1 Kings 8. 46.*) *If they sin against thee* presently puts it into this position, *for there is no man that sinneth not.* The Apostle concludes, (*1 John 1. 8.*) *If we say we have no sin, we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us.* Therefore, this, *If I have done iniquity* is not to be understood as if this or that man, as if he or any man might be without sin; but when the penitent is brought in, saying, *If I have done iniquity*; his meaning is, First, What ever iniquity I have done, I am willing to leave it, to abandon it, I will do so no more. Secondly, Thus, *If I have done iniquity*, that is, if I have done any great iniquity, if I have acted perverseness, or perversly, as the word signifieth, I will do so no more; to do iniquity is more then barely to sin. As if he had said, *though I cannot promise that I will sin no more; yet, Lord, if thou dost discover to me any iniquity, any gross sin or perverseness, I will do that no more, I will engage my self against that sin with all my might; and to the utmost of my power, by grace received, I will keep my self pure from every sin. If I have done iniquity.*

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Perverse ageve.

Hence Note. First,

A godly man hath a gracious suspicion of himself that he hath done evil, yea some great evil, that he hath done amiss, yea greatly amiss, though he be not able to charge himself with this or that particular iniquity.

He knoweth he hath sinned & done evil, though he knoweth not every evil he hath done, nor how sinfully he may have sinned; he doubts it may be worse with him then he seeth. Possibly *he hath done iniquity.* *Job* in reference to his children (*chap. 1. 5.*) had an holy suspicion that in their feasting they might sin against God; he knew no sin they had run into, nor could charge them with any excess; but he was jealous they had sinned; nor did *Job* speak thus, as if his meaning were, that possibly in their feasting some corruption might work in them, (he knew there is no man in the best duties of his life wholly freed from the workings of sin) but he had this jealousy, that they might have fallen into some great

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sin,

sin, and so provoked God greatly against them, therefore he did (as it were) way-lay such guilt, and early sought reconciliation with God. As *Job* was thus jealous of his children, so a gracious heart, though he cannot charge himselfe with this or that evill, yet he is apt to suspect his owne heart, and feares it may be worse with him, then possibly, it is.

Secondly, When he saith, *If I have done iniquity*; This humble man, though he doth suppose that he might have done iniquity, yet he doth but suppose it.

Hence note.

A godly man may live free from the doing of any grosse sin.

He doth not put an *if* upon it whether he had sinned or no, but, whether he had done iniquity. *Zachariah* and *Elizabeth* were not without sin, but they did no iniquity; for, saith the text (*Luke 1. 6.*) *They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blamelesse.* It cannot be imagined but that the people of *Israel* sinned, yet (*Numb. 23. 21.*) *God saw no iniquity in Jacob, nor perversenesse in Israel.* There may be such a time in the Church when the people of God have no iniquity, no provocation to be seene or found among them. Though a Godly man cannot deny but he hath sinned, yet he can affirme that he hath not indulged himselfe in any sin. *If I have done iniquity,*

I will doe no more.

The Hebrew is, *I will not adde.* We render, *I will doe no more.* As if he had sayd; If upon tryall, it be found that I have done iniquity, yet I will not adde iniquity to iniquity, I will not goe on, I will not persist, nor proceed in iniquity. I will not take a step more in any way which God shall discover to me to be an evill way. If I am out of the way, I will not goe on in my way.

Hence observe.

First, *A godly penitent person is resolute against sin.*

His will is set against it; *I will doe no more.* I shewed in opening the former verse (*It is meete to be sayd unto God, I have borne chastisement, I will offend no more*) in what sence a godly man may make such a promise, or say, *I will sin no more*; here I say, *A godly man*

man is reſolute againſt ſin, eſpecially againſt great ſins. As a carnall man hath but very weake reſolves for the doing of good, he hath (as ſome expreſſe it) but a *volleity*, ſomewhat like a will to doe that which is good ; ſo a carnall man makes but weake reſolves againſt evill, he hath not a ſetled will, but a kind of *volleity* againſt it. He makes ſome flouriſhes of profeſſion againſt it, but he is not reſolvedly ingaged againſt it ; whereas a godly man is reſolute both as to the doing of good, and the not doing of evill. If a godly man might have his will, he would never ſin more ; And as a Godly man waiteth joyfully for that ſtate of glory wherein he ſhall ſin no more ; ſo a reſolution to ſin no more, hath, as I may ſay, ſomewhat of glory in it. In glory we ſhall ſin no more, and where grace is in truth, that ſoule would gladly be rid of ſin, and ſin no more. A godly man is reſolved againſt all ungodlineſſe ; and this is a kind of entrance into glory.

Againe, Whereas the penitent man ſaith, *I will doe no more.*

Note.

Continuance in any knowne ſin (for, ſaith he, what I know not teach thou me) or in that which is made knowne to us to be ſinfull, is inconfiſtent with true repentance.

Repentance for and continuance in ſin, cannot conſiſt in the ſame ſubject. This is the voyce of every gracious ſoule, I would not ſin any more, or I would not continue any longer in ſin. To ſin is common to man, but to continue in ſin, is proper to a wicked man. To erre and faile that's humane, but to perſevere in error is diabolicall. Sin will continue in us while we continue in this world ; but they that are not of the world, doe not, will not continue in ſin, how long ſo ever they are in the world. Sin may be conſidered three wayes. Firſt, as remaining in us ; Secondly, as reſerved ; Thirdly, as preſerved by us. There is ſin remaining in the beſt of Saints on this ſide heaven (*Rom. 7. 20, 21, 22, 23, 24.*) Sin is reſerved only in carnall men, they ſave their ſins, and would be ſaved, not from but in their ſins. Sin is preſerved or maintained and defended in the worſt of wicked men. Sin is heightened to the utmoſt, where 'tis not only retained, but maintained and preſerved. The Apoſtle having cloſed the fifth Chapter of his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, in the triumph of Goſpel grace. *That as ſin hath reigned unto death, ſo grace might reigne through*

righteousnesse unto eternall life by Jesus Christ our Lord, begins the next with a prevention of the abuse of this Grace ; *What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin that grace may abound ? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein ?* How can we continue in sin, that are partakers of Gospel grace ? Sin will continue in us, but we cannot continue in it. The question implyeth a kind of impossibility. We were once dead in sin, but now we are dead to sin, how then can we live or continue in it ? *Perseverance is either our best or our worst.* To persevere is best when we persevere in good, and to persevere is worst when we persevere in evill. It is bad to be or doe evill, but it is worse to abide in evill. The first best is not to sin, the next best is not to continue, nor lodge in sin, no not for an houre. *Paul sayd in another case (Gal: 2. 5.) To whom we gave place by subjection, no not for an houre ;* We should not give place to sin, no not for a minute, but resist it to the utmost, and totally displace it, if we can.

Lastly, From the Hebrew elegancy, which saith, *I will not adde.*

Note.

A godly man may commit sin after sin, but he doth not adde sin to sin.

When he hath committed any one sin, he breaks it off and destroyeth it by repentance. He doth not adde sin to sin, because the sin formerly committed is destroyed by repentance. His former sin is taken off the file before he acts a second, who heartily repenteth of the first, and as heartily resolveth not to commit a second. Such a man doth not run a round of sinning and repenting, though he sinneth after the hath repented. *Daniel gave that advice to Nebuchadnezzar (Dan: 4. 27.) Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by shewing mercy to the poore.* If thou repentest indeed, the sin that cometh after will not be added to thy former, because that is done away through Grace. A godly man (according to the former poynt) would not adde or commit another act of sin to his former ; as it is sayd of *Judah (Gen: 38. 26.)* who had committed folly with *Tamar*, *He knew her againe no more.* Though his sin was great, yet doubtlesse his heart was humbled, and he returned not to his former sin. But the wicked

wicked man continues in his wickednesse, yea, he *blesseth himselfe in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the iniquification of mine heart, to adde drunkennesse to thirst* (Deut. 29. 19.) Every new sin is an addition to his former sins, because he alwayes liveth in sin. They who would not have the captives brought into the City, gave this reason (2 Chron. 28. 13.) *For whereas we have offended against the Lord already, ye intend to adde more to our sins, &c.* O take heed of sinning so, as to joyne sins together. As in Arithmeticke when we adde summe to summe, what an huge summe may we quickly make. Therefore breake off sin by repentance, that if thou sinnest againe, it may not be an adding of sin to sin. That's a dreadfull prophesie and threatening (Psal. 69. 27.) *Adde iniquity to their iniquity, and let them not come into thy righteousness.* How doth the Lord adde iniquity to iniquity? will he cause any to sin more? or will he doe any iniquity? No; the meaning is (as our margin intimates) the Lord will adde the punishment of their iniquity to their iniquity; or he will give them up to the power of their owne lusts and vile affections, so that they cannot but renew the acts of sin, and adde one iniquity to another. It is a blessed worke when we are much in the additions of grace to grace, and of good workes to good. 'Tis the designe and businesse of a gracious heart to adde grace to grace, that is, the exercise of one grace to another, till every grace be exercised (2 Pet. 1. 5.) *Give diligence to adde to your faith vertue, and to vertue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience.* Here is a blessed addition. When a good man hath done well once, he adds to doe more, he adds more acts of the same kind, and he adds to doe good acts of any other kinde; He adds patience to godlinesse, and to godlinesse brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; thus he is busied in a blessed way of addition. But the addition of sin to sin, is the bitter fruit of rebellion against God (Isa. 30. 1.) *Wo to the rebellious children — that cover, but not with a covering of my Spirit, that they may adde sin to sin.* They that make excuses for sin committed, adde sin to sin; yet by these coverings, we may understand not only excuses and pretences, for sin acted, but our owne good acts; for to cover sin with any thing of our owne, is to adde sin to sin. Yet I conceive, the adding of one kind of sin to another, is the addition there meant. The *Israelites* sayd:

sayd to *Sammel*, when they were brought to a sight of their sin (*1 Sam: 12. 19.*) *We have added unto all our sins this evill to ask us a King.* They refused the Lords government, and asked a king in the pride of their hearts, and so added sin to sin. Thus 'tis sayd of *Herod* (*Luke 3. 20.*) *That to all his evill deeds, he added this, that he shut up John in prison.* And as there is an adding of severall kinds of sin, so of severall acts of the same kind of sin, oath to oath, and adultery to adultery, and wrong-dealing to wrong-dealing; this day some oppresse their brethren, and the next day they doe the same. O let such remember what additions the Lord will make to them, he will adde punishment to punishment, he will adde the same kind of punishment several times, he will adde sword to sword, and famine to famine, and pestilence to pestilence, and he will adde punishments of various kinds. The Prophet reports what various or (if I may so speake) heterogeneous kindes of sin men added and strung up together. (*Hos: 4. 2.*) *By swearing, and lying, and killing, and stealing, and committing adultery, they break out and blood toucheth blood.* Surely, God will make blood touch blood in a way of punishment, as men make blood touch blood in a way of sin. The adding of sins makes an addition of plagues. *When Jehoiakim the King heard the roll read, he threw it into the fire and burnt it* (*Jer: 36.*) but could he burne or make an end of the threatnings? no (*v. 32.*) *And there were added besides unto them many like words.* It is sayd (*Rev: 22. 18.*) *If any man shall adde unto these things, God shall adde unto him the plagues that are written in this booke.* To adde any thing to the holy word of God, is as sinfull as to take from the word, or act against it. God can adde plagues as fast as men adde sins. When sin is added to sin, then guilt is added to guilt, and punishment to punishment. Take heed of this addition, resolve with the penitent soule in the text; *If I have done iniquity, I will adde no more.*

J O B. Chap. 34. Vers. 33, 34, 35.

Should it be according to thy mind? he will recompence it whether thou refuse, or whether thou chuse, and not I: therefore speak what thou knowest.

Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me.

Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.

IN the Context of these three verses *Elihu* doth chiefly these two things. First, he appeals to the Conscience of *Job* (v. 33.) *Should it be according to thy mind?* ask thy selfe whether it should be so, yea or no. Secondly, he appeals to the judgement of *Jobs* friends, yea of all wise and understanding men, concerning what *Job* had spoken, or whether he had not spoken unwisely, in the 33d and 34th verses; *Let men of understanding tell me, and let a wise man hearken unto me. Job hath spoken without knowledge, and his words were without wisdom.*

The scope of *Elihu* in these words is yet further to humble *Job*, and to provoke him to repentance for his inconsiderate speeches. Yet *Elihu* doth not call *Job* to repentance upon the same grounds or termes as his three friends had done. They moved him to repentance upon the Consideration of his former wicked life, as they supposed; but *Elihu* moves him to repentance upon the Consideration of his imprudent and rash speeches under the afflicting hand of God.

Vers. 33. *Should it be according to thy mind?*

This verse is delivered in as much variety as any text thorow-
out the whole Book; and as a learned writer upon it concludes;
If we should stay upon all the various readings, translations, and in-
terpretations of it, we should rather darken then enlighten, rather
entangle both hearers and readers, then unfold the text. There are
at least six distinct translations of this verse, which I shall passe
only with the naming of them, and then proceed to open the
words as they stand in our owne; which comprehends the summe
and

*Si omnes lectio-
nes versiones
interpretatio-
nes persequere-
mur, plus tene-
brarum quam
lucis afferemus.*
Pined:

and substance of what is held out in most of them.

First, Some give it thus; Should he reward it according to thy minde, though thou hast despised the one, and chosen the other, yet will not I, therefore speake what thou knowest. As if he had sayd, Why should God reward him, as thou wouldest have him doe it? Though thou hast refused to submit to Gods mercy, and hast called for justice, yet I dare not doe so. If thou know better teach me.

Secondly, Another thus; Should it come from thee, how he should recompence it, when thou hast refused his correction? but thou shalt choose and not I, therefore speake what thou knowest. The sence of which translation may be thus represented; Shouldest thou who hast sinned, and refusest to be corrected, teach God how he should correct thee? Thou mayest thinke so, but I doe not, shew me better if thou canst.

Thirdly, Should that come from thee, which he will punish? I speak it, because thou hast refused Gods correction, because thou hast chosen that which I would not. Now speak what thou knowest. As if he had sayd; Why shouldest thou speak against Gods proceedings, to bring farther trouble upon thee? my desire of easing thee is the cause, why I speak thus; I should never have accused God as thou hast done, if I had been so handled by him. But if thou hast any thing to except against what I say, speak freely.

Fourthly; Did such a speech come from thee? He will recompence it, that thou hast rejected him; But thou choosest this way and not I: now speak what thou knowest. As if Elihu had thus exprested himselfe to Job; I never heard thee speak so humbly, as I have taught thee (v. 31, 32.) Surely God will punish thee, because thou hast spoken proudly against his proceedings with thee. But this is nothing to me, who like not of such courses. If thou canst defend thy selfe, so doe.

An ergo (hac oratio profecta est) a te? responderet illud si proverbia (scilicet hac oratione uti, &c. Jun:

Thus Junius connecting this verse with the former, wherein is shewed what a penitent person should say to God, translates and expounds the whole to this sence; Now therefore consider, hast thou spoken in such a manner, surely God will recompence it to thee, if thou refusest to speak so, (thus he deterreth him by the consideration of the event, or of what might follow upon his refusal, and then he deterreth him by his owne example) but if thou choosest to doe otherwise, truly I will not. (Thou shalt goe alone for me) Now then speak what thou thinkest.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, Should therefore God recompence that which man hath done according to thine opinion, saying, because thou dislikest this, it is but equal, that thou shouldest choose another and not I. And what dost thou know? speake man.

Sixthly, Mr Broughton renders thus; *Should that come from thee which he will punish; as thou dost loath, as thou likest, where I would not? Now speake what thou thinkest.*

An igitur ex tua opinione rependet deus illud quod homo fecerit dico, &c? Pisc:

All these renderings may be reduced to this one common sense; O Job, whatsoever thou sufferest, or by what means soever thou art fallen into this misery, is it fit that God should be ordered by thy opinion and Judgement? And surely, O Job, I must tell thee plainly, nor canst thou deny it, that thou hast not rested nor sat down quietly in the determination and decree of God concerning thee; But thou wouldest rather be chusing and prescribing to God, how and in what way he should deale with thee, and dispence his providences to thee, then satisfie thy selfe in his appoyntments and pleasure. Farre be it from me, that I should follow thy example, or tread in thy steps as to this matter; yet if thou hast any thing to reply to what I have urged, say onne, bring it forth, let me and all in thy presence, heare and iudge of it.

Thus *Elihu* poynts *Job* to his grand error, that he did not readily approve, nor quietly submit to the Judgement of God in his owne case. And so had not spoken reverently enough of God, nor humbly enough of himselfe.

The reason of these various readings and renderings mentioned, is the conciseness of the Hebrew text, which leaves some words to be understood and supplied for the compleating of the sense. And because the most skilfull Interpreters are not perfectly acquainted with the dialect or manner of speech used in those more remote and ancient times, therefore they must needs differ both in their translations and expositions, yet (which may free the reader from all prejudices against the holy Scriptures, either as obscure or dubious) they all center and agree in that which is true in it selfe, as also in the principall scope and drift of *Elihu* in this discourse with *Job*.

Having thus given some account of the various translations of this verse, I shall now close with the explication of our owne.

Should it be according to thy mind?

Thus *Elihu* bespeaks *Job*; *Should it be?* he doth not say what, but leaves us to the whole matter, should this, or that, or t^o other thing, or any thing be according to thy mind? the Hebrew text is but one word, which we translate; *according to thy mind*, or, *as thou wouldst have it*? should it be from thee? that is, should God take counsell or direction from thee? or goe to thee as an Oracle to be taught which way to deal with thee, or with any man else; should it be from thee? The matter which *Elihu* insists upon, respects the dispensations of God; So his meaning is, should God cut out the workes of his providence according to thy order? should God reward, or should God punish? should God set up, or should God pull down? should God bring trouble, or should God cause peace according to thy mind? must he needs ask counsell of thee, before he proceed to any of these resolutions? no!

He will recompence it whether thou refuse, or whether thou chuse.

The former part of the verse, is a question or Interrogation, *Should it be according to thy mind?* *He will recompence,* &c. That's the answer; and it contains both a negative and an affirmative, he will not doe according to thy mind, but he will doe according to his own; *He will recompence it.*

The verb signifies to pay, or appease, and make quiet, and the reason why the same word signifieth paying, or recompencing, and peace, is because where payment is made, peace is obtained, where recompence is given, there quietness is settled; *He will recompence, or he will pay*, that is, give out and distribute in his providences as he pleaseth.

Whether thou chuse, or whether thou refuse.

There are two speciall acts of the will, chusing and refusing; and these two are Intrinsicall and Essentiall to the will; as the proper act of the understanding is to apprehend, and then to assent; so upon those representations which the understanding makes to the will, the will doth either refuse or chuse. Further, the word which we here translate to *refuse*, signifies more then that simple act of the will, it signifies to refuse with a kind of disdain and

העמד

Num ex tuo
consilio et arbi-
tratu rependet
illud sc: bonum
vel malum, sed
de malo proprie
accipio. Merc:

ישלמה a
radice שלם

denotat
reſpicere cum fa-
stidio tanquam
vile et cōtemp-
tūm. quid.

and great diſguſt ; to reſuſe a thing as altogether unworthy to be received ; or to reſuſe a thing as being much diſpleaſed and burdened with it. *Elphaz* uſeth this word (*Chap. 5. 17.*) *Deſpiſe thou not the chaſtening of the Lord* ; that is, doe not reſuſe it with a diſlike, or as a thing that is grievous and nauſeous to thee. That which is contrary to our appetite, the ſtomack reſuſeth and vomits it up againe ; ſuch a force there is in this word , he will recompence it, *whether* and how much ſoever *thou reſuſe*

or whether thou chuſe.

He puts that in, to ſhew that it is neither the reſuſall of man that ſtops God, nor is it the choyce of man that brings God onne to his worke , he will proceed purely from himſelfe ; he will recompence whether thou reſuſeſt , or whether thou chuſe, *and not I.*

As if he had ſayd, it is God that will doe it , it is God that will bring this upon thee, *and not I* ; that's the ſenſe of our reading ; But according to other readings, *and not I*, refers, to *thou* ; doe thou reſuſe or chuſe whether thou wilt obey the diſpenſation or no, for my part I will not ſtand upon thoſe termes with God, but referre my ſelfe wholly to his diſpoſe.

From the words thus opened (*Should it be according to thy mind ? &c.*

Obſerve ; Firſt.

Man would have every thing goe according to his mind.

He would have his mind the meaſure both of all that he is to doe for God ; and of all that God doth to him. We love to doe all things according to our own minds, and we love to have all things done according to our own minds. Man naturally would doe nothing according to Gods mind ; nor would he have any thing done to him according to Gods mind , unleſſe it accord with his owne too. The Apoſtle (*Rom. 8. 7.*) proclaimes that Innate Enmity that is in the heart of all men naturally againſt the mind and will of God ; *The wiſdome of the fleſh is Enmity againſt God : It is not ſubject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be* ; that is, while a man remaines fleſh , or in an unregenerate ſtate, he is altogether at enmity againſt the Law of God ; both againſt what God appoynts him to do, & againſt what he appoynts

him to suffer. Man equally riseth up in his thoughts, and rebels against both. And as this enmity doth remaine whole and unbroken in all men by nature, till they are renewed by grace and borne againe; so there are remainders of it, even in those who are renewed by grace; there is somewhat of this opposition against God in every godly man; he would faine have things goe according to his mind; and he hath much of this mind in him; I doe not say, a godly man would doe nothing according to Gods mind, that's the naturall mans frame; but a godly man would very faine have God doe things according to his mind, as may appeare, especially in foure things:

First, He would have God reward, or doe good both to himselfe and others, according to his mind; He would have God lift up those whom he would have lifted up, and preferre those whom he would have prefer'd; he would faine have God shew favour to or bestow favours upon those whom he favours.

Secondly, As to punishment and Judgement, he would have God punish according to his mind; such a man is proud, he is an oppressor, he is an opposer of goodnesse and good men, therefore he would have the hand of God heavy upon him, to cast him down out of hand, or without delay.

Thirdly, He would have God goe according to his mind in chastning and afflicting himselfe; though he would not be totally uncorrected, yet he would have God correct him only in such a kind, in such a manner and measure as he would chuse; he doth not refuse chastening, but he would be chastened in what himselfe pleaseth, or in his owne way. He saith in his heart, if God would correct me in this or that, I could bear it, but I doe not like to be corrected in such a thing, or in such a way; one saith, if God would smite me in my Estate I could bear it, but not in my body; Another saith, if God should smite me with sicknesse, I could bear it, but not in my Children; or let the affliction be what God pleaseth, if God would afflict me but thus much, or thus farre, in such a degree, I could submit, but my heart can hardly yeild to this measure of affliction. Thus we would have it according to our minds, as to the measure, as also for the continuance of our afflictions. We would be corrected for so long, for so many dayes, but to have months of vanity, and yeares of trouble, this is not according to our mind.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, He would have God govern (not only himselfe but) the whole world according to his mind: Man hath much of this in him, he would have God order nations as himselfe and other men like himselfe desire. Some one man would prescribe and direct what God should doe, and how he should doe to all men. *Luther* writ to *Melanchton* when he was so exceedingly troubled at the providences of God in the world; *Our Brother Philip is to be admonisht, that he would forbear governing the world; we cannot hardly let God alone to rule that world which himselfe alone hath made; Should it be according to thy mind? to this mans mind, or that mans mind? it must not be as it is; if every man might have his mind, he would govern and rule the world in another way then God doth. There is scarce any Good man that is satisfied in the government of particular nations, if he might have his mind, he would cast things into another mould and method then the providence of God hath cast them in at this day. Yea, 'tis sel-dome, that it either raines or shines according to our mind; The weather which God is pleased to send, whether wet or dry, sayre or foule; rarely pleaseth us.*

Secondly, When *Elihu* saith; *Should it be according to thy mind?* This question implyeth a strong Negation; certainly, it should not.

Hence note,

'Tis beside the duty and above the line of man to desire that things should be according to his mind, either with himselfe or with others.

There's nothing more against the mind of God, nor against our owne good, then that all things should be according to our mind; we may quickly undoe our selves and dishonour God by having our owne desires. And that it is sinfull, very sinfull to desire to have our owne desires, may appeare, by considering the spring or roote of such desires, I shall shew a three-fold very evill roote from whence those desires spring.

First, They spring from pride and an over-weening conceit of our selves; and that upon a double account; First, from pride as to our deserts; for if God doe such men good, they are apt to think they have deserved more good, then God hath done them; and if God afflict them, they are ready to say, surely they have

not

not deserved so much affliction. We think we have deserved greater kindness then God exhibits; and that we have not deserved so great a crosse as he inflicts. Is not this a great piece of pride?

Againe, These desires spring from pride in our own wisdom & understanding; as if we knew how to order matters more equally then God. Is it not a huge piece of pride, of luciferian pride, to thinke that there might be a better measure of things then the mind of God is? doth not such a man make himselfe wiser then God? and more prudent then God? doth not he suppose, that he sees further into things then God? when as alas we cannot see an houre before us, but God hath the prospect of all things, He seeth *the end from the beginning*, and hath all in his eye from all Eternity. When we thus make our selves wiser then God, is not this a high poynt of pride? Here's the first evill roote of desiring to have things according to our mind, *pride*, or an opinion that we deserve better, or could order things better.

Secondly, These desires proceed as from pride, so from discontent with the dealings of God, and 'tis pride that fills us with discontent; he that would have things according to his minde, must needs be dissatisfied when they are not.

Thirdly, when they spring not from direct discontent, yet they do from some degree of impatience. There is not such a quietness of spirit or acquiescence as should be in the heart of man, otherwise he would let things be according unto Gods minde, and never be troubled, when they are not according to his own. Now consider what can spring from these three roots, Pride, Discontent, and Impatience, but very evil and bitter fruit; therefore, to desire to have things according to our mind is very sinful, exceeding sinful.

Thirdly, This question, *Should it be according to thy minde?* implyeth a sharp rebuke and a reproof upon *Job*, as desiring a thing which was altogether against rule and reason.

Hence Note.

It is most unreasonable and absurd, to desire that things should be ordered as we would have them, and not as God would have them.

Is it not unreasonable in a family that things should be as the children

children would have them, and not as the Father would have them? Or, that things should be done according to the minde of the servants, and not according to the minde of the Master? Do not the Magistrates and Governours of the world think it an unreasonable thing that Nations should be governed according to the minde of Subjects, and not according to the minde of the Prince, regulated according to the known Laws of the Nation? Who doth not think it an unreasonable thing, that a journey should be disposed according to the minde of the Horſe, and not according to the minde of the Rider? Should the horſe guide the Rider, or the Rider his horſe? Is it not an unreasonable thing that a mans ſenſe ſhould guide his underſtanding, when his underſtanding is given on purpoſe to guide his ſenſe? Is it not an unreasonable thing that paſſion ſhould order reaſon, when as reaſon ſhould be the bridle of our paſſion? Is it not an unreasonable thing that unlearned ignorant men ſhould teach the knowing, when the learned & knowing are ſet up to teach the ignorant? and is it not much more abſurd and unreasonable for us, to deſire that things ſhould be according to our minde, either with our ſelves or others, families, or Nations, and not according to the minde of God? Should things be as the beſt, as the wiſeſt, as the holyeſt men in the world would have them, and not as God would have them; it were more abſurd and unreasonable then that things ſhould go in a family according to the minde of the ſervants and children, rather then according to the minde of the Maſter and Father; yea it were more abſurd then any of thoſe fore-mentioned abſurdities. *Should it be according to thy minde, O Job?* how unreasonable a thing were that!

Fourthly, From thoſe words, *He will recompence it, whether thou reſuſe, or whether thou chuſe.*

Note.

God will not yeild to men, nor be ſubject to their pleaſure.

God will do what he pleaſeth, as I may ſay, in ſight of any mans reeth. Things muſt paſs in ſuch a way as God hath appointed, and ſees meet to diſpoſe of them; and not as we would have them. *He will recompence*: God is reſolute for the doing of his own will, and men are uſually over-reſolute for the doing of theirs; and indeed ſome are as it were wholly changed into will, or rather willfulneſs;

fulness, they will do this, and they will do that ; they will have this, and they will have that. Men may quickly, but God can never act too highly, too strongly, too confidently upon his own will ; the reason is, because his will is an holy will, and the rule of righteousness. Only Consider from the whole.

Man is never displeased with what God doth, till he forgetteth what himself is.

Man forgets that he is a worm, and no man, he forgets that he is a creature, he forgets himself to be dust and ashes, else his spirit would not be wrought up to such a height, to have things go according to his minde, and not according to the minde and will of God.

And seeing God will have every thing go according to his minde and will, know there's no striving nor struggling with God ; if man will not bow to the will of God, he shall be broken by the will of God : if he will not submit to it, he must fall by it. There's no avoiding one of these two, *for he will recompence*. Therefore let us yeild up our selves freely to God, to be ruled by him, and not set him the rule, no nor so much as give him advice ; let us receive the Law, and take advice from him. *God is our Commander, but we must not be so much as his Councillors*. The Apostle speaking of the eternal purposes and decrees of God, saith (*Rom. 11. 34.*) *Who hath been his Councillor ?* As God had none to counsel him concerning his eternal purposes, so we must not adventure to counsel him as to his daylie providences or dispensations, either toward our selves, or others ; the true rule of our life is, to yeild our selves to be ruled by God. *He will recompence it, whether we chuse, or whether we refuse.*

And not I.

As if he had said, If thou wilt struggle with the will of God, thou mayest, but I will not. God will go his own way, and do as he sees good, say thou what thou canst, or howsoever it please or displease thee. And for mine own part, I dare not entertain or give way to a thought of prescribing to him in any of these things, what he should do ; no nor be unsatisfied with, much less censure, what he hath done. Therefore, if thou canst acquit thy self of this crime and accusation which I have laid to thy charge,

as thou didst theirs who spake before, do it, say what thou canst for thy self.

Hence Note.

He that sees another do amiss, ought to take heed of doing the like himself.

Again, As these words, *and not I*, refer to the word *recompence*, *He will recompence, whether thou chuse, or whether thou refuse*; the meaning of them may be conceived, as if *Elihu* had thus bespoken *Job*, *If thou dost smart for thy pride, and the height of thy spirit, if God pay thee home for it, do not lay the fault upon me; I have given thee counsel to direct thee better, I desire not thou shouldst come under such a handling, but certainly God will do it.* When we have declar'd the minde and will of God, in the severity of his judgements upon sinners, it is good for us to say, God will do it, and not we. The Prophet *Jeremiah* (chap. 17. 16.) having warned them of an evil day, addes, *Nor have I desired the woful day, Lord thou knowest it: Jeremiah* had spoken woful things against that people, but (saith he) *I have not desired that woful day, though I have prophesied of it.* So *Elihu* seems to speak, he will recompence, and *not I*; though it be not in my minde, yet I assure thee 'tis the mind of God.

Yet further, Some read these words with the former as an Interrogation or rebuking question made by God himself; *What? Should you chuse, and not I? Election or choice is my priviledge, not thine, thou must not think to prescribe to me. I will chasten and afflict, as I think fit, or according to my own will, not according to thine. Thus he brings in God speaking to Job; thou findest thy self much aggrieved, and complaineest that thou art afflicted more then is meete; It should seem then, that I must do what thou thinkest fit, not what I think fit my self. Surely thou must give me the rule, how much, how long, and in what manner I must correct both thy self and others. Should you chuse, and not I: How uncomely!*

Therefore speak what thou knowest.

Here *Elihu* gives *Job* time to reply, as he had done (at the 33d chap. vers. 5.) as if he had said, *If thou knowest any thing against what I have spoken, or art able to make any objection against it, speak;*

P P P P P

if

if thou thinkest I have not spoken right, shew me my errour, and spare not.

Hence Note, First ;

When we have declar'd what we judge to be the minde of God in any case, we should give others liberty of speaking their minds also.

This is my opinion, speak what thou canst against it ; we should speak (2 Cor. 1. 24.) *Not as having Dominion over the faith of others, but as helpers of their joy* ; The Ministers of Christ must speak as Servants to, not as Lords of the faith of others. *Elihu* did not carry it as a Lord over the faith of *Job* ; but left him to make good his own opinion and practise if he could.

Secondly Note.

Knowledge is the fountain of Speech.

We need no other light to speak by then that of reason, the understanding should feed the Tongue ; we must not speak at a venture, but keep to Rule and take our ayme. The Apostle *Paul* tells us of some who make a great noise, but know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm (1 Tim. 1. 7.) they speak they understand not what, and vent what they can give no account of ; *Speak what thou knowest.*

Thirdly Note.

We should speak (when called) what we know.

Knowledge is a Talent, and must not be hid in a Napkin ; if thou know better then I speak, pray speak, do not hide thy knowledge. As *Elihu* would have *Job* speak in his own case, so he inviteth others to speak about his case, as it followeth in the next verse.

Vers. 34. *Let men of Understanding tell me, &c.*

In this 34th verse *Elihu* turns his speech to *Job's* friends again, presuming of, or not questioning their consent to what he had said, being confident that himself was in the right, and that they were wise enough to apprehend it. He was perswaded that all wise men either were, or (upon hearing the matter) would be of his minde, and that therefore what *Job* had spoken, was
very

very defective of wisdom, as he concludes in the thirty-fifth verse.

Let men of understanding tell me, &c.

He appeales to *Jobs* friends, or any other *men of understanding* . let them (saith he) Consider what I and he have spoken, and give their judgement impartially concerning the whole matter in debate between him and *Job*. *Let men of understanding tell me, &c.*

The Hebrew is, *men of heart* : the heart is the seat of understanding, according to Scripture language, there we read of a wise heart, and of an understanding heart ; and it saith of a foolish or indiscreete person, *he hath no heart* ; he is a man without a heart. *Ephraim is a silly dove without a heart* (Hos: 7. 11.) that is, he doth not understand. Mr Broughton translates ; *Sad men of heart will speake as I, and the wise person that heares me*. As in the former part of the verse *Elihu* called for speakers ; so in the latter he calleth for hearers ; *Let men of understanding tell me,*

And let a wise man hearken to me ; or as some render, a wise man will hearken to me.

The word rendred *hearken*, signifies more then to heare, even to submit, to obey, a wise man will hearken to me ; that is, he will assent to, and consent with me, he will vote with me, and declare himselfe to be of my mind. In that *Elihu* appealed to wise and understanding men.

Note, First.

It is not good to stand to our owne Judgements altogether, in dealing with the Consciences of others.

Let wise men, let men of understanding, heare and consider the matter, let them speake their minds ; we should not leane to nor rely upon our owne understanding in the things which concerne our selves only, much lesse in those, wherein others are concerned more then our selves. *Eyes see more then an eye*. And though it be an argument of too much weakness to see with other mens eyes ; yet it is an argument of much goodness and humility, to call in the helpe of other mens eyes.

Secondly, Note.

The more wise men agree in any matter, the greater is the Conviction.

One man may speak to Conviction, but if many speak the same, it is a very strong Conviction. Many (I confesse) may center and agree in a wrong Judgement ; yet we ought to have a reverend esteeme of, and not easily differ from that Judgement wherein many wise and understanding men agree. Christ speaking of Church-proceedings and censures, saith (*Math: 18. 19.*) *If two of you (who constitute the least number, much more if a greater number of godly wise men) shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall aske, it shall be done for them, &c.* So still the more wise, holy, and learned men agree in any poynt, the greater is our conviction, and the stronger our obligation to submit to it. He that doth not heare a single brother, his fault is great ; much more if he heare not two or three ; most of all when he doth not heare the Church speaking to him, and testifying against him in the name of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly, *Elihu* having made a long discourse, appeals to wise men.

Hence note.

He that believeth he hath spoken truth, is not afraid to have it considered by those who are best able to judge what is true.

Truth feares not any test, or tryall. He that offers pure gold and silver, cares not who toucheth it, or takes the Assay. *Wisdom* is (sure enough to be) *justified of her children.* They who understand truth, and love it, can doe nothing against the truth, but for it.

Fourthly, *Elihu* having discoursed long, is willing to referre it to men, and to let them judge of it.

Hence note.

He that hath spoken truth in his uprightness, hath reason to believe that he shall have the Consent of the upright with him.

There is a sameness of spirit in all wise and godly men for the maine, and for the most part it is so in particulars. If a godly man conscienciously judge such an opinion to be truth, he may be much assured, that other wise and godly men will be of his opinion too. He

He dares ſay, as *Elihu*, *Let wiſe men hearken unto me.*

Fifthly, and laſtly, In that *Elihu* makes his appeal to wiſe men, to men of heart.

Note.

All men are not fit to give their Judgement in a caſe.

All are not Competent Judges, nor prepared to give an opinion; and if they doe 'tis not much to be regarded; wiſe men, ſpecially godly wiſe men, men of a holy underſtanding, are the men whoſe judgement and opinion is to be regarded. *Elihu* having beſpoken the thoughts and opinion of wiſe men, ſeemes to give his owne in the next words.

Verſ. 35. *Job hath ſpoken without knowledge, and his words were without wiſdome.*

When *Elihu* had offered it to the Conſideration of wiſe and underſtanding men, whether *Job* had ſpoken right about that great poynt, *Submission to the abſolute Sovereignty of God*, he forbare not firſt, and plainly to declare his owne underſtanding of it.

Job hath ſpoken without knowledge.

The Hebrew is, *not in knowledge*, or, *not knowingly*; that is, ignorantly, fooliſhly; a very high charge; *Job hath ſpoken without knowledge*; yet we are not to underſtand it as if *Elihu* thought *Job* an Ignorant, or an unknowing man, he could not but know otherwiſe; but as to this particular caſe, he reports him as a man that had ſpoken without knowledge, and declared himſelfe both beſide his duty, and the rule.

Hence note.

They who are very wiſe and knowing in many things, yet may be out in ſome.

The beſt of men are not perfect, either in grace, or knowledge. We may know much, and yet come ſhort in what we ought to know; A man may ſpeak ſome things very underſtandingly, and yet ſpeak other things very erroneouſly; A *Job* may be out ſometimes. *Job hath ſpoken without knowledge.*

And.

And his words were without wisdom.

When the Lord comes to decide this great Controversie in the last Chapter of this Book, he tells *Job's* three friends, that their words had not been right, as the words of *Job*; and yet here *Elihu* saith, *Job's words were without wisdom, or, not in wisdom.* When God said, the words of *Job* were right; we may understand it, that they were so according to their general tenour, or they were so comparatively to what his friends, *Eliphaz*, *Zophar*, and *Bildad* had said in his case, or at least his last words (after God had thoroughly convinced and humbled him) were so, though in many things he had sayled in speech, or spoken those things which were not right before. Yet here *Elihu* spake truth, while he sayd, *his words were without wisdom* in the speciall poynt he had to doe with him about; and so much *Job* himselfe acknowledged, *I have spoken once, yea twice, but I will speak no more*; I will no more set my wisdom against the wisdom of God, nor presume to have things goe according to my mind; let God doe what he will with me hereafter.

Consider, how well this good man tooke the plain-dealing of *Elihu*; It might be expected that *Job* would quickly have risen up in passion, especially when he heard himselfe thus urged; But being convinced, with what *Elihu* spake, he gave him not a word, much lesse an angry word.

Hence note.

A good man where he is faulty, will heare reproofe with patience.

A gracious heart, will soone be angry with himselfe for speaking or doing amisse, but he can take it well to heare himselfe reprov'd, when he hath indeed either spoken or done amisse. Nor are there many greater and clearer arguments of a gracious heart then this. To beare a reproofe wel is a high poynt of commendation. Grace may be shewed as eminently by our patience when we are rebuked for doing that which is evill, as by our forwardness and zeale in doing that which is good. When *Nathan* the Prophet applyed the parable home to *David* after he had not only committed but continued long impenitently in his grievous sins of adultery and murder, telling him to his face, *Thou art the*
the

the man (2 Sam: 12. 7.) and not only telling him so , but at once upbrayding him with all the former benefits and kindneses of God to him, & threatning him with many dreadfull future judgements (v. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.) when (I say) he was thus sharply dealt with, it might have been feared, that this Great king would have risen up in passion, and roared like a fierce Lyon upon the Prophet ; yet we heare nothing from him but words of sorrowfull confession, and humble submission (v. 13.) *I have sinned against the Lord.* The boldnesse of *Paul* was great in blaming *Peter* openly, and *Peters* meeknesse was as great in bearing that blame (*Gal.* 2. 14.) Nor doe I know whether the patience of *Job* were greater in bearing the great afflictions that God layd upon him, or in bearing the great reproofs which this man layd upon him. I grant, he complained often of those bitter reproaches which his three friends cast upon him, charging him for a wicked man or a hypocrite, and then he replyed and replyed home : but here *Elihu* reproved him sharply for his rash speeches and intemperate carriage under his affliction, and he tooke it both meekly and silently. A good man will not storne, nor rage, nor revile, nor threaten, when he is justly reprehended, but lyes downe under it, and takes it quietly, yea thankfully, and goes home and bleseth God that he hath met with a knock ; These are very hard words, *Thou hast spoken words without wisdom ;* But *Job* seemes to confesse and patiently beare them : *It is best for us not to doe or speak any thing that deserves a reproofe : and 'tis the next best, to receive a reproofe well for what we have either done or spoken ill.*

JOB. Chap. 34. Verſ. 36, 37.

*My desire is that Job may be tryed unto the end, be-
cause of his answers for wicked men.*

*For he addeth rebellion unto his sin, he clappeth his
hands amongst us, and multiplyeth his words a-
gainſt God.*

IN theſe two verſes *Elihu* windes up his ſecond ſpeech to *Job*, and in them we have two things conſiderable; Firſt, his motion made in reference to *Job* at the beginning of the 36th verſe; *My deſire is (or this is the thing that I move for) that Job may be tryed unto the end.* Secondly, we have the reaſon of this motion, which ſome make three-fold, others four-fold, taking the latter part of the 36th verſe for one of the four; *My deſire is that Job may be tryed to the end, why?*

Firſt, *Be cauſe of his answers for wicked men.*

Secondly, *I deſire he may be tryed unto the end, why? for he addeth rebellion unto his ſin.*

Thirdly, *I deſire he may be tryed unto the end? why? he clappeth his hands amongst us, and*

Fourthly, *I deſire he may be tryed to the end, why? he multiplyeth his words againſt God.* Others take the latter words of the 36th verſe, only as the ſubject matter about which *Elihu* deſires *Job* may be tryed, that is, concerning his answers for wicked men. And ſo the 37th verſe contains three reaſons why he deſires he may be brought to that tryall.

Verſ. 36. *My deſire is that Job may be tryed.*

So we tranſlate, and we put in the margin, *O my father*, moſt or
 אבא voluit many tranſlaters put that into the text, *O my father*, Let *Job* be
 cupiit, unde אבא tryed unto the end. The firſt word of the text hath a two-fold ſig-
 pater, quaſi be- nification; ſome taking it as an application to God by the name
 nevolus dictus. or title father. The reaſon of this difference is, becauſe the roote
 Pater mi pro- of that Hebrew word which ſignifies a father, ſignifies to deſire,
 betur Job uſq; to will or wiſh. Mr *Broughton* renders, *O my father* (and he adds,
 ad victoriam. Jun: O

O my father which art in heaven) Let Job be tryed unto victory. As if *Elihu* (saith he) looking up to heaven, by *O father*, meant what followeth, *O father which art in heaven*. And he quotes *Abraham Peritzol* (a learned Rabbin) expounding the words so translated, at larg.

Father is one of the sweetest and most honourable compellations of God. (*Isa: 63. 16.*) the whole Church of the *Jewes* is brought in bespeaking God in that Relation; *Thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, &c.* And God speaking of himselfe, saith (*Mal: 1. 6.*) *A son honoureth his father, if I be a father, where is my honour*. It was usuall even among the heathens to adde the name *father* to their Idol gods, thereby to expresse their reverence, or veneration of them.

Apud Gentiles
pater commune
nomen erat
Deorum; unde
Diespiter, Mer-
spiter, Jupiter.

O my father.

They who embrace this translation take speciall notice of that pronoun *My, O my father*. He doth not say only or barely, *O father*, but *O my father*. Those appropriating possessive pronouns, *mine, thine*, have a kinde of deliciousnesse in them, and breath abundance of affection. *Luther* sayd the sweetnesse of the Gospel lyeth in pronounes; when a believer can say (with believing *Thomas*) *My Lord, and my God*. Those things or persons which we love most we call ours; we say of a single speciall friend, *he is mine*; and to say, such a one is mine, is as much as to say, he is much beloved, much prized or esteemed by me, he, as it were, lies next my heart; property rayseth the price of all good things. We rejoyce in God most, when we can call him ours; and so doth God in us, when he takes us for his owne. We have a meeting or union of severall possessive pronouns in one verse (*Cant: 8. 12.*) *My vineyard which is mine is before me: My, mine, before me*; implying how much *Jesus Christ* did appropriate the Church unto himselfe, or how much he thought himselfe concerned in the prosperity of the Church. And as the Title *Father* is sweet and comfortable, so glorious and honourable; God is the father of all, and all fatherhood is derived from God. That of the Apostle (*Eph: 3. 15.*) which we translate, *of whom the whole family, &c.* Others render, *the whole fatherhood, in heaven and earth is named*. For as God only is good, and other things are good only by communication from him, so God only is a father, and all other father-

ἐξ ἧς πάρα πα-
τρὶα. Ex quo
omnis paterni-
tas. Vulg:
Paternitatis
nomen ex se-
metipso largi-
tur omnibus;
sicut enim solus
bonus dicitur
quia bonitatem
alijs communi-
cat, &c. Hieron:
in Epist.
ad Ephes:
cap. 3.

hood is by derivation and communication from him. *O my father, let Job be tryed unto the end.* We say,

My desire is.

The Hebrew text is as cleare for that ; and whether we say, *O my father, let Job be tryed*, or, *my desire is that Job may be tryed to the end*, the general sense is the same. We render the word by *desire* (Chap: 9. 26.) where *Job* tells us, that his life or the life of man is like the *swift ships* ; we put in the margin, *ships of desire* (it is this word) that is, like those ships which being most desirable (as being laden with the richest and most precious commodities) make most hast home to their harbour, or proper Port. Thus here, *My desire*, or the thing that I strongly wish is, &c. The Chaldee paraphrase renders, *My will is, or I will*

*Volo ego ut
probe ur Job,
&c. Targ:*

That Job may be tryed.

But had not *Job* been tryed already ? was there any need to call him to a farther tryall ? had he not been in the furnace a long time ? why then doth *Elihu* so earnestly importune that *Job* might be brought to tryall ?

I answer ; The word signifies a two-fold tryall ; First, a tryall by way of examination, or argumentation ; we try a man when we examine him, and argue with him, * when we scann and search out what he hath spoken, or what he hath done. In this sence the word is used (Chap: 12. 11.) and at the 3d verse of this Chapter, *the eare tryeth words* ; that is, the eare examineth the sense and meaning of those things which are spoken ; and by the eare, he meanes not only the sensitive faculty taken abstractly, but the sensitive faculty joyned with the intellectuall. A beast hath an eare and can heare, but a beast cannot try or examine that which is spoken and heard ; only they that have ratioll faculties joyned with the sensitive are able to try words, and matter delivered by them. *I desire Job may be tryed to the utmost*, that the words and speeches which have past from him, may be fully considered, or considered to the end, that it may, at last, appeare what he hath asserted and maintained.

*Sunt qui intel-
ligunt probari
pro exagitari
disputatione,*

Secondly, It signifies a tryall by affliction (*Zech: 13. 9.*) *One third shall be brought through the fire and tryed.* As mettall gold or silver is tryed and refined in the fire, so shall they in the fire.

fire of affliction. Jesus Christ is called *a tryed stone* (Isa: 28. 16.) *sed præstat ut* and he was so in both these accounts ; he was examined and ar- *ad tentationem*
 gued with to the end , and he was afflicted, and grieved to the *referatur per*
 end, he was a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs all his *afflictiones.*
 dayes ; *Behold I lay in Zion a tryed stone , a sure Corner-stone ;*
 that which is tryed is sure ; we may trust that which hath been
 tryed. We say, *try me and trust me* ; we may understand *Elihu*
 in both, or in either of these senses. My desire is that *Job* may be
 tryed, that what he hath sayd may be further examined, or that his
 affliction may be continued, till he be brought to a sight of his
 errors and mistakes. I would have him corrected till he submits
 to God as a conqueror , and recanteth his rash and inconsiderate
 answers. *My desire is that Job may be tryed*

*Optatū ut tan-
 tisper flagelletur
 Job donec deo
 vincenti cedat
 et responsis va-
 ni renunciet.*

Unto the end.

He doth not say barely, *tryed*, but, *tryed unto the end* ; that is, *hum* *נצח* *ver-*
fully and *thoroughly* tryed , not by halves , overley and slightly ; *nificat instare*
 If he be indeed just and sincere, the fire of this tryall , how long *et urgere opus*
 soever he continueth in it, will doe him no hurt, it will only purge *donec ad finem*
 and refine him from his remaining drosse ; but if he be unsound *perductum fue-*
 and nought , he will evaporate and fume away into vaine com- *rit.*
 plaints and murmurings ; Therefore *let him be tryed to the end.*

Some of the Latines translate, *I would have him tryed to death*,
 which is the end or period of man in this world. The word sig-
 nifies *sempeternity*, as also *victory*, because that which continueth
 ever, must needs be victorious (1 Sam: 15. 29.) *The strength*
of Israel will not lie ; we put in the Margin, *The eternity or victory*
of israel (that is , the eternall God , who is victor over all) *will*
not lie. Thus some render here, *I desire Job may be tryed unto vi-*
ctory, that is, that God would never give over trying him, till he
 hath overcome him and brought downe his spirit, for still the man
 is too high, too stout, his spirit is still too big, too unbroken ; my
 desire therefore is that God would try him to victory, till he hath
 brought him upon his knees, and made him eate his words, or till
 he give glory to God by humbling himselfe and confessing his sin ;
 I would have him fully convinced by argument and thoroughly
 humbled by chastisement, till he at last resigneth up himselfe to
 the will of God. The *Italian* glosse puts it in the forme of a pray-
 er ; *Withdraw not thy visitation from Job , untill thou hast brought*

*Pleriq; latini,
 ad mortem us-
 que reddunt
 quod in Origi-
 nali habetur,
 usq; in sæcu-
 lum vel in
 sempiternum.
 Variablis lon-
 go Tempore ;
 Gregoriū, Ad
 huc. Philippus
 Jugiter.*

Q q q q q 2

him

him to the duty of a child ; Further, this word, *unto the end*, doth not imply a deſire of the everlaſtingneſs of his tryall, but of the profitableneſs of it. He would not have him alwayes kept upon the rack, or under the rod, but he would have him effectually dealt with, that the matter might iſſue wel with him.

From the words thus opened, note firſt.

Affliction is a tryall.

It makes us appeare what we are ; moſt have but an appearance till they are tryed ; and being tryed, what they are doth really appeare. Afflictions try our graces what they are ; and afflictions try our corruptions what they are. Afflictions draw forth the ſpirit of a man, they turne his inſide outward, and ſet him (as it were) in the open light. Take tryall in the ſecond ſence by way of examination, and it yeilds us the ſame truth. He that is thoroughly liſted will appeare in his own likeneneſs. Let a man be fully dealt and argued with, let his ſpeeches and his actions be brought to the rule of the word, what he is, and what they are, will ſoone be ſeene. That's the tryall which the Apoſtle means (*1 Theſ: 5. 2.*) *Prove all things* ; prove what men ſay and hold, prove their aſſertions and opinions, and you ſhall come to a cleare underſtanding of them. The rule of the word is a ſtraight or right rule, and that which is right will ſhew you both it ſelf, and that which is crooked, or any way ſwerving and departing from it.

Reſtumeſt indices ſui et obligas.

Secondly, As tryall is taken in the former notion for affliction, *My deſire is that Job may be tryed unto the end.*

Note.

It is lawfull to pray or wiſh for afflictions upon others in ſome caſes.

We may pray for and wiſh afflictions upon others for their good, or for the glory of God. It is not good to wiſh evill as evill upon any man, no not upon the worſt of men. *Job* professed againſt that (*Chap: 31. 29, 30.*) *If I have rejoyced at the deſtruction of him that hated me, or have ſuffered my mouth to ſin by wiſhing a curſe to his ſoule, then &c.* As if he had ſayd, If I have prayed or wiſhed that any evill might befall mine enemy as evill, I ſhould have done very ill, and deſerved to ſuffer ill. For that had been an evill wiſh. Yet, as we our ſelves ought to chuſe affliction rather

rather than sin; so we may pray for affliction upon others, rather than that they should goe on in sin. As in that case of the Churches proceeding to the sentence of excommunication; which is the delivering of a person up to Satan, or a putting him into the very power of the devill for a time (1 Cor: 5. 4, 5.) it is the end or designe which makes this lawfull: our business in the ministry and in all Church-administrations, is to put soules out of the power of Satan, to rescue them out of the hand of the devill, to recover those that are led Captive by him at his will; yet saith the Apostle, *Deliver such a one unto Satan*, put him into the devills hands, for what end? *For the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* This makes the prayer or act of the Church lawfull, because the intendment is the destroying of that which ought to be destroyed, or to destroy that in man which will be the destruction of man, *his flesh*, his lust, his pride, his covetousnesse, his wantonnesse; *For the destruction of this flesh deliver him to Satan, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.* Thus we may pray and wish for affliction upon others; but 'tis a prayer which must be managed with a great deale of caution, lest our prayers to God in that kinde, be found ill wishes to men. That which *Elihu* had in his thoughts, when he desired *Job* might be tryed to the very end, was, that he might be prevented from going on in the way wherein he was to the end. Yea, I conceive a man may pray for afflictions upon himselfe, rather than he should goe on in a course of sin, or, when he findes that other wayes and means which God hath used with him, have not been effectually to subdue his corrupt heart, to mortifie his lusts, and to bring him off from a course of sin, but that (as it is sayd in the next verse) he is in danger of *adding rebellion to his sin*. A godly man had much rather that God should make him poore, sicke, weake, and nothing in this world, then let his corruptions have dominion over him; He desires rather God should take the world quite out of his hand, then that the world should get into his heart, or be as fuel to feed and enflame his lusts.

Thus *Elihu* desired that *Job* might be tryed, because tryalls by affliction are for our purging, refining, and bettering. Love was the roote of this wish, not hatred or ill will. *Let Job be tryed to the end.* Why? we may take the latter part of the verse for a reason why, as wel as for the matter about which he would have him tryed.

Because

*Bono ipsius op-
lat hoc, non o-
dio aut male-
volentia. Drusi.*

Because of his answers for wicked men.

Propter respon-
siones (commu-
nes) cum homi-
nibus improbis.
Bez:
Tanquam unus
e numero viro-
rum vanorum.
Pisc:

Let him be tryed concerning those words which he hath spoken in common with or after the manner of vaine men. He hath spoken words wherein he seemes to comply with wicked men, to lay as they say, to consent with them, and to be of their opinion, this was charged upon him directly by *Elihu* at the 8th verse of this Chapter; *What man is like Job, who drinketh up scorning like water, which gaeth in company with the workers of iniquity, and walketh with wicked men*; that is, though *Job* in his conversation or carriage of his life hath not, yet in this discourse, he hath strengthened the hands of wicked men, or confirmed them in their opinion, speaking so much of the heavy pressures of God upon him, and desiring so often to come to a hearing, as if he had some wrong done him. We are not to understand these words of *Elihu*, *Because of his answers for wicked men*; As if he charged *Job* to doe so directly, or as if he had formally taken upon him to plead or advocate the cause of wicked men; we are not (I say) to understand him so grossly, nor had it been true to say, that *Job* opened his mouth, or spake thus for wicked men; but his meaning is, he hath spoken such things as in common apprehension seeme to comply with the opinions of wicked men; or with the speeches which they use when they are (like him) in a troubled condition.

Or againe, *Because of his answers for wicked men*; that is, that he may acknowledge the answers he hath given, are not such as doe become a godly man, but rather favour of such a spirit as unbroken proud persons hold forth in the time of their affliction; who are never pleased with, but alwayes complaining at divine dispensations.

Lastly, These words, *Because of his answers for wicked men*, may, possibly, have this sence; Because he hath spoken such things as may serve the turne of wicked men for answers, or, as if he would instruct them what to answer, when at any time they are under the hand of God. He may be sayd to answer for another man, who any way prompts him how or what to answer. And while a good man speakes amisse, in any case, he teacheth, yea and encourageth bad men to speake so too. Yet I rather incline to the first interpretation, that *Elihu* would have *Job* tryed, because his answers were such as it might be judged he had taken wicked men

men for his patterne in giving them, and not as if in them he had given a patterne to wicked men.

Hence note.

First, *A good man may sometimes act the part of a wicked man, or he may speak like wicked men, as if he were one of them.*

Though his state be as different from the state of wicked men, as light is from darknesse, or as sweet from soure, or white from black, yet as to some actions or speeches, he may beare a resemblance to them. Good men and bad men doe, as I may say, enter-common in many things; a wicked man whose heart is nought, who is yet in an unregenerate estate (for I meane not by a wicked man, him only that is flagitious, a murderer, a whoremonger, a drunkard, but a wicked man is any one that is unregenerate, whose heart is not yet changed; Now I say, a wicked man) may speak and doe many things like a godly man; he may heare the word, and pray, and performe outward duties, which are like and are (take them materially) the same which godly men performe. Thus he enter-commons with godly men; and this is the case of all hypocrites, who make a pretence of religion, when they have no acquaintance with the power of it. And thus through temptation, and in some very burthensome afflictions a godly man may speak as a wicked man; such hasty rash provoking speeches may passe from him as proceed from the ungodly, only here is the difference, those evill speeches or actions proceed from the state of the one, and only from the temptation of the other.

Secondly; From the phrase or forme of speech, in which the originall expresseth wicked men; The words are, *Men of wickedness, or iniquity*; As if it had been sayd, the worst of wicked men. This shews us what man naturally is; *he is a man of wickedness*; nothing but wickedness, altogether wicked. The Lord looking downe from heaven upon all the children of men (in a state of nature) sayd, *There is not one that doth good, no not one.* Take any wicked man he hath no good in him, no not one good thought in him; he is a man of Iniquity, he is meere wickedness, till he be changed, till his heart be broken by Godly sorrow, till he be united unto Christ by faith, and through the Spirit. I know this expression is used severall times in Scripture, to note those men who are sinners of the first forme, being not only sinners in
their

their state, but in the highest degree of activity. Thus Antichrist is called, *The man of sin* (2 Thel: 2.) And when the Prophet saith (Isa: 55. 7.) *Let the man of iniquity turne from his evill way*; he meanes the worst of men. Yet this is a truth, every man in an unconverted estate is a man of iniquity; he hath no goodness, nothing of God in him, he bears only the Image and impresse of the devill upon him. Christ told the Pharisees, who were high in reputation with the world for good men (John 8. 44.) *Ye are of your father the devill, and the lusts of your father ye will doe.* The naturall man is so sinfull, that he is meerly sin. And sometimes a godly man speakes and doth as if he were so too. *Job* spake like men of Iniquity.

Elihu proceedeth more fully to declare both the reason why he would have *Job* further tryed, and likewise what he meant by *his answers for wicked men.*

Vers. 37. *For he addeth rebellion (or trespass) to his sin.*

Nomine **ΠΑΡΟΝ**
intelligitur pec-
catum ex erro-
re commissum;
Nomine vero
ΥΠΕΡ scelus
proprie rebel-
lio.

Here are two words, *sin* and *rebellion*; the first which we render *sin*, signifies sin in common; the least transgression of the Law it is sin; the least vaine thought of the heart, the least idle word of the tongue is sin; but every sin is not rebellion; that hath many speciall markes or brands rather upon it. To rebell is to sin with a high hand, to rebell is to sin with a stiff neck, to rebell is to sin with obstinacy and resolvedness of will; *he addeth rebellion to his sin.* But did *Job* rebell indeed? I conceive the rebellion which *Elihu* chargeth *Job* with, is not rebellion in a strict but in a qualified and comparative sense; As if he had said; *Job* sinned before, but now his sin is heightened, we see him now (in words) rising up against God, complaining of his justice, or as if he had dealt unjustly with him. What he did in the time of his prosperity, those slips & falls which he had then, weighed nothing as laid in the ballance with the intemperate speeches which he hath uttered in the day of his trouble. *He addeth rebellion unto his sin.* So we render as respecting what he was and had done before. Others render it potentially not indicatively; *Let Job be tryed unto the end, because of his answers for wicked men, for otherwise he may adde rebellion to his sin*; we know not whether his corruptions may carry him if suffered to goe onne. This is a more favourable reading of the text,

text, not as a charge of naturall but feared rebellion againſt God; As if he had ſayd, *I ſee the mans ſpirit is ſo entangled, that if he be not well and wiſely dealt with, poſſibly he may come to adde even rebellion unto his ſin*; and whereas he ſinned before out of ignorance or imprudence, he may ſhortly ſin out of contumacy and perverſeneſs.

Hence Note.

First, *There are ſins of ſeverall degrees.*

Every man ſinneth, he that ſaith he hath no ſin, or doth not ſin, there is no truth in him (*1 John 1. 8.*) But every mans ſin is not rebellion, every man doth not riſe up to that height and degree of ſinning. If any ſhall enquire, when is a mans ſin rebellion? I anſwer.

First, That mans ſin grows to be rebellion, whoſe will is much in it. He that will ſin rebels. The Apoſtle Paul ſaith (*Rom: 7. 19.*) *The evill which I would not, that I doe.* This is the caſe of every godly man at his beſt, he doth thoſe evils which he would not; this is not rebellion, becauſe the will of a godly man is changed and turned off from ſin; he can ſay, the evill which I would not doe, that doe I. Rebellion is the doing of that evill which we would.

Secondly, In rebellion, or in rebellious acts of ſin, there is much of the underſtanding as well as of the will; that is, a man ſeerh cleerely what he doth is ſin, or that the rule is againſt him; to rebell is to ſin againſt the light. It is ſayd in the 24th Chapter of this booke, *The wicked are of them that rebell againſt the light*; that is, they cannot abide the light; he means it there of the naturall light; the adulterer and the thiefe cannot indure Sun or day-light: it is much more true of myſticall light, if he hath any light of knowledge, he reſiſts and rebels againſt it. Its great rebellion to reſiſt the receiving of light offered, but 'tis greater rebellion to reſiſt light received; ſins againſt knowledge are rebellious ſins.

Thirdly, A rebellious ſin is a ſin againſt reproofe, admonition and warning; when we have been often told of ſuch a ſin, and admoniſhed of ſuch an evill courſe, and yet we will goe on in it, here is rebellion; ſuch a man hath not only light in his underſtanding, that what he doth is ſinfull, but this light hath been

brought home to him and wrought upon him by reproofe, counsell, and admonition; here is ſtill greater rebellion. Therefore in the proceeding of the Church, ſpoken of (*Math. 18.*) when an offending brother hath been reprov'd and told of his fault, firſt in private by a particular brother, then by two or three, then by the whole Church; if after all theſe admonitions and reproofes, he doth not repent, he is to be caſt out as a rebel, and accounted as a heathen or a publican.

Laſtly, As 'tis rebellion when we ſin as againſt the reproofes of man; ſo againſt the providences of God; and thoſe of two ſorts.

Firſt, When we ſin againſt the favourable providences of God, I meane thoſe which are outward; when God beſtows many mercies and comforts upon us, when he gives us health and riches in the world, and fullneſſe of all things, then to ſin againſt him is rebellion. (*Deut. 32. 15.*) *Jeſurun waxed fat and kicked, and rebelled againſt the Lord, and lightly regarded the rock of his ſalvation.* When we have received many and great mercies, then to grow vaine and wanton, and nourish our ſelves as in the day of ſlaughter, this is rebellion againſt God.

Secondly, When the providences of God have broken us by this evill or that evill, when we are broken in our eſtates, broken in our names, broken in our relations, broken with ſickneſſe after ſickneſſe, and yet perſiſt in a ſinfull way, this is rebellion, this is ſin in the very height of it. This was the rebellion of *Akax* (*2 Chron. 28. 22.*) *Who in the time of his diſtreſſe, treſpaſſed yet more againſt the Lord.* And this was the rebellion of *Jadab* (*Iſa. 1. 5.*) *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will revolt more and more.* Take heed of this; 'tis too much that we ſin at all, let us not be found adding rebellion to our ſin. I may ſay theſe two things concerning the habit or any act of ſin.

Firſt, It is a burthen to a Godly man; *O wretched man that I am* (ſayd *Paul.*) *who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?*

Secondly, As it is a Godly mans burthen when he ſins, ſo it is his care and ſtudy not to ſin; he would not ſin at all; he watcheth himſelfe that he may not ſin in the leaſt degree. That was the Apoſtle *Johns* deſire and care for all the Churches (*1 John 2. 1.*) *My little children, theſe things I write unto you, that ye ſin not.* I would have you watch over your hearts and wayes ſo narrowly,
that

that no sin might slip you ; that ye might not have a wrong thought, nor speake an idle word ; how much more should we take heed, that we adde not rebellion to our sin. There is somewhat of rebellion in every sin, even in the sins of good men ; but 'tis sad when they adde rebellion to their sin. *Samuel* gives a dreadfull description of that sin which is rebellion (*1 Sam: 15. 23.*) *Rebellion is as the sin of witch-craft, and stubbornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* Witch-craft is that sin wherein men have much converse and compliance with the devill ; The devill and the witch, or the devill and the Diviner (as our *Margin* hath it) act as loving companions ; they have mutual converse, yea commerce, they trade together. Rebellion is that sin, or we sin rebelliously, when we declare our selves most averse to God. The witch declares himselfe a friend to the devill ; the rebellious soule desiereth and despiseth God ; now those sins that have most compliance with the devill, and most defiance against God, are put together ; if a man doth much set himselfe to oppose God, by sinning against light, against reproofes, and against providences, whether the gracious or afflicting providences of God (If a man (I say) rebell thus against God) it is like the sin of witch-craft, which is compliance and converse with the devill. Here is an extreame on the one side, and an extreame on the other side, yet both meete, *rebellion is as the sin of witch-craft, and stubbornness is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* These latter words are exegaticall ; *stubbornness* (that is, when a man is stout and will goe on his way) *is as Iniquity and Idolatry.* We may consider a great elegancy in those words ; *Stubbornness is as Idolatry.* What is Idolatry ? it is worshipping or giving honour to a false god, which is indeed worshipping the devill ; all Idolatry is devill-worship ; the witch worshippeth the devill intentionally, and so doth the Idolater, though he intend it not (*1 Cor: 10. 20.*) *The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devills and not to God.* I doe not say, every error or fayling in worship is devill-worship, but that which is Idolatry indeed, or the setting up of a worship of our owne devising is Idolatry, and devill-worship. Thus stubbornness is as Idolatry, and rebellion is as witch-craft. What is witch-craft ? compliance with the devill. What is Idolatry ? devill-worship, a falling downe to the devill. Let the wicked consider what they doe when they rebell ; and let the

people of God take heed of any sin, or way of sinning, which may be accounted rebellion. To sin with much will against much light, against many reproofs from men, and against the reproofing, or against the inviting providences of God, hath rebellion in it; *He addeth rebellion to his sin.*

Secondly, Taking the words in the mildest sense,

Note.

Sometimes a good man may goe backward, he may be worse and worse, and doe worse and worse.

We should be alwayes growing in grace, that's the condition of believers and their duty, yet under some dispensations they may decline for a time and grow worse and worse, adding that which is like rebellion to their sin.

Thirdly, If we consider these words in connection with the former; *Elihu* having prayed for further tryall upon *Job*, as fearing, that else he might adde rebellion to his sin.

Note.

He that is not thoroughly convinced and chastned, may quickly grow worse and worse.

He may, or he will adde rebellion to his sin. I doe not know where a mans sin will end; if the Lord should let him alone. 'Tis a mercy that any man, especially that God hath a continuall inspection over us; if some mens wayes were not tryed and questioned, they might adde rebellion to their sin; who knows where they would stop? it is a mercy to have both words and actions examined by brethren and Churches, how sadly else would many wander, yea it is a mercy to be tryed by affliction. When God keeps us from a foule way by building a wall against us, it is a mercy, else we might adde rebellion to sin. No man knowes the measure of his owne evill heart, or what it would doe; for though believers have a generall promise *to be kept by the power of God to salvation*; yet how lamentably have good men fallen, though kept from falling away? *Elihu* aggravates this yet further by the example of *Job* in the latter and last part of the verse.

He clappeth his hands amongst us, and multiplieth his words against God.

He.

He clappeth his hands, or, maketh a noyse amongst us, as Mr *Broughton* reads it; clapping of the hands in Scripture hath a three-fold signification.

First, It implyeth passion or sorrow. A man under affliction claps or wrings his hands for griefe. Both those gestures are of the same significancy.

Secondly, There is a clapping of the hands with indignation; when we are very angry, then we clap our hands.

Thirdly, There is a clapping of the hands for joy, or in a way of triumph; when a man thinks he has conquered and got the day, he claps his hands, and so doe they who are on his side. (*Psal.* 47. 1.) *O clap your hands (all ye people) shout unto God with the voyce of triumph.* I conceive *Elihu* intends *Job* clapping his hands in this third sence; he clappeth his hands amongst us, *Explosum est* *ser nos, ut qui* or insults over us, as if he had conquered and wonne the Gar- *vicisset nos di-* land; and therefore *Elihu* prayed that he might be further try- *putando. Pisc.* ed. This is another aggravation of that ill frame which *Elihu* conceived *Job* to be in. And indeed to clap our hands when we have done or spoken evill, is worse then the evill, which we have either done or spoken; *He clappeth his hands*;

And multiplieth his words (or, may multiply words) against God.

Solomon saith (*Pro.* 10. 19.) *in the multitude of words there doth not want sin*; that is, there is store of sin in the multitude of words. They that will be speaking much, slip much. *Job* (saith he) *multiplieth words against God.* There is a multiplying of words against God two wayes; First, directly; Secondly, by way of reflection or rebound; *Elihu* could not say, *Job* had spoken, nor could he presume he would speak one word, much lesse multiply words against God directly. He knew *Job* was a godly man, but he asserts he had, or feared he might multiply words against God reflectively, that is, speak such words as might cast dishonour upon God, such words as God might take very ill at his hands, and interpret as spoken against himselfe.

Hence note.

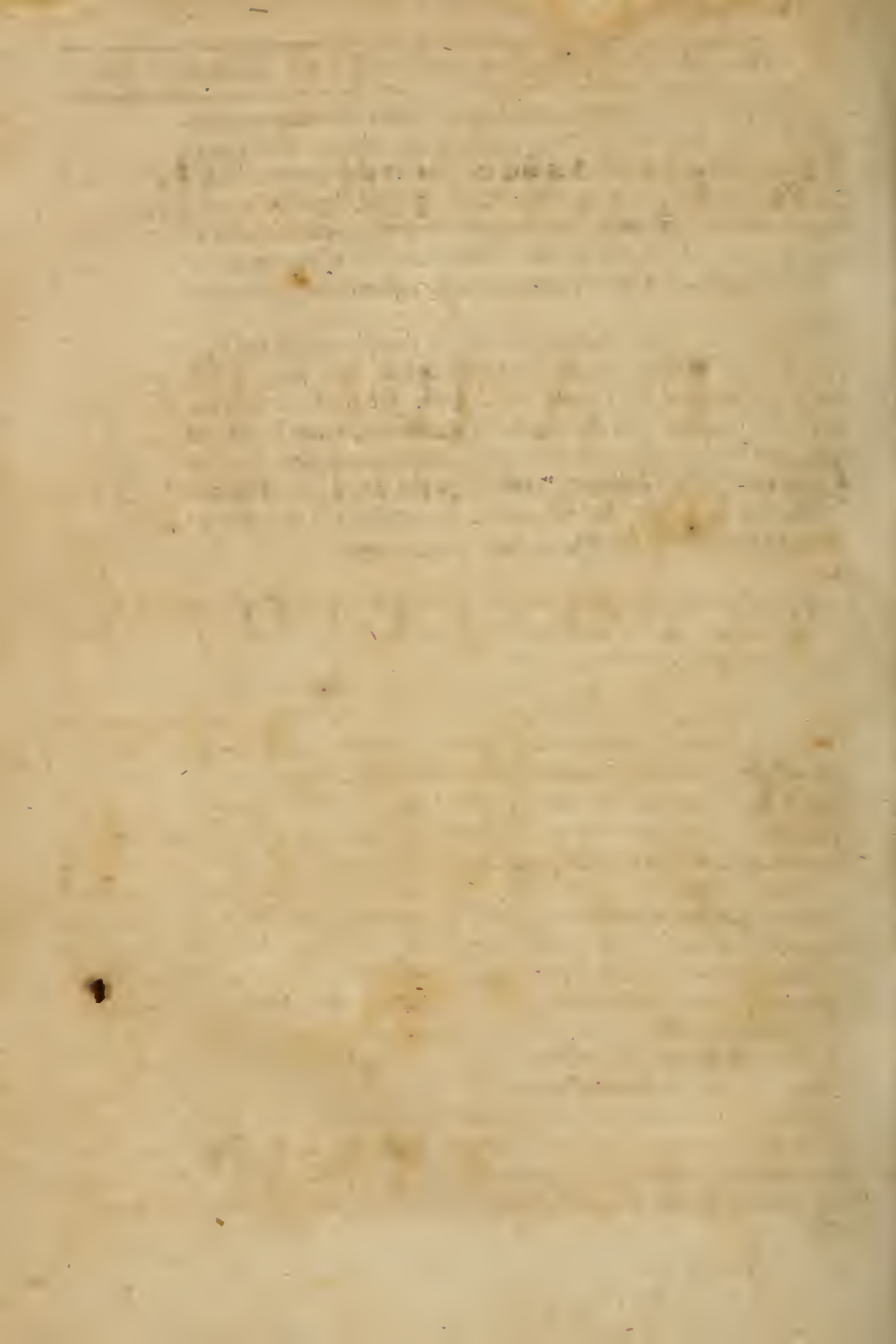
They who speake unduely of the wayes and proceedings of God with them in this world, speake against God himselfe.

The.

The business of *Elihu* in all this discourse, was to hold forth the evill frame of *Jobs* heart, signified by the intemperance of his language under the dealings of God. God had afflicted and chastened *Job*, he had multiplyed wounds upon him, and *Job* in the heate of his spirit and bitterness of his soule, making many complaints about the workings of God with him, is charged with multiplying words against God. We may speake against God before we are aware; yea we may speake many words against God when we thinke we have not spoke one word against him. While we speake impatiently of the proceedings of God in the world, and murmur at his dispensations to our families or persons, what doe we but multiply words against God? we speake much for our selves to God, yea (I may say) we highly commend our selves to God when we submit to his doings, and say nothing, but in a silent admiration adore his dealings, and waite for a good issue of them. *Aaron* proclaimed both his humility and his faith in holding his peace, when the Lord slew his two sons *Nadab* and *Abihu*, strangely with fire, for offering strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not (*Lev.* 10. 1, 2, 3.) But how many are there who proclaime their pride and unbelieve, by not being able to hold their peace under the afflicting hand of God, when his hand scarce toucheth them, or when he doth but lay the weight of his little finger upon them, in comparison of that heavy stroake which fell upon *Aaron*. We are in much danger of sinning, when at any time we speake many words, or (as *Elihu* speaketh) multiply words, he is a rare man that speaketh many words, and but some amiss, Now, if to multiply words at any time (even when we are most composed) exposeth us to error in our words, how much more when our tongues utter many words in the bitterness and discomposure of our spirits? And as to speake amisse in any matter is to sin against God, so to speake much amisse of our sufferings, or of the severest providences of God towards us, is to speake much, or to multiply words (though not intentionnally) yet really and indeed against God. O then forbear this multiplication of words, lest you multiply sins. Speake but little, unlesse in the praise of God; take heed how you speake of what God is doing to others, or doing to your selves. Let your words be few, and let them be weighed, for God will weigh your words; and you may heare from him in blowes, what he heareth from you in

in words. 'Tis a dangerous thing to be found speaking words against God ; yet this may be the case of a good man, whose heart is with God, and whose heart is for God : even while he hath a general bent of heart to lay himselfe out in speaking and doing for God, he through passion and temptation may be found speaking against God. What we speake discontentedly of the wayes or works of God, is a multiplying of words against God himselfe.

Thus I have given out and finished my thoughts upon the Preface which *Elihu* made to lead in his discourse with *Job*, as also upon two stages of his discourse with him. *Job* sits silent and answers him not a word, which *Elihu* perceiving takes liberty to urge him further with two distinct discourses more, contained in the three Chapters following ; which, if the Lord give life and leave, may be opened and offered to the readers use and acceptance in convenient season.



A

T A B L E

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in the precedent
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A



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